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Turco-Soviet Relations during the Cold War Era (1945-1991)

Behçet Kemal Yeşilbursa*

(ORCID: 0000-0001-6309-5703)

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Abstract

Traditionally, Soviet attitude to Turkey was governed by strategic concepts as a result of the latter's possession of the Black Sea Straits, and from its proximity to vital targets in Ukraine and Transcaucasia. Thus, Turco-Soviet enmity has deep roots going back to the struggle between the Russian and the Ottoman Empires, which began in the 15th century with the gradual conquest of the Black Sea, Transcaucasia and Balkans by the Turks. However, during the eighteenth and early twentieth century, Russia enlarged its territory primarily at the expense of the declining Ottoman Empire. It was only with the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, that the Russian irredentist ambition enshrined in the "Warm Waters", the Russian/Soviet desire to gain access to the Mediterranean, was effectively abandoned. As a result, Turco-Soviet relations reached a peak in the Atatürk era and again later in the 1960s and 1970s. On

* Prof. Dr., Bursa Uludağ University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of History, Türkiye, behcetyesilbursa@yahoo.com.

Prof. Dr., Bursa Uludağ Üniversitesi, Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi, Tarih Bölümü, Türkiye.

19 March 1945, as the war in Europe about to end, the Soviet Government reported to the Turkish Government its decision to put an end to the Turco-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Non-Aggression dated 17 November 1925. The claim was that the Treaty was no longer relevant given the new conditions emerging after the Second World War. On 7 June 1945, Selim Sarper, the Turkish Ambassador to Moscow, in his meeting with Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, stated that Turkey wished to form good relations once again. Molotov, however, wanted bases on the Straits in addition to the Kars-Ardahan region in return for restored relations and the reinstatement of the treaty. Turkey did not accept these demands. As a result, the Soviets decided not to renew the treaty, which was the beginning of strained relations between the Turks and the Soviets which lasted until 1953. After Stalin's death, the Russians attempted to restore their relations with Turkey to their relatively relaxed pre-war level. The Turks, however, were cautious in their response. Developments in Soviet-American relations in the early 1960s led the Turks to reconsider their dependent relationship with the United States and to take on a less uncompromising approach towards the Soviet Union, resulting in the second period of good Turco-Soviet relations after the Atatürk era.

Keywords: Turkey, Russia, Soviet Union, Turco-Soviet Relations, Turkish Foreign Policy, Soviet Foreign Policy.

Soğuk Savaş Döneminde Türk-Sovyet İlişkileri (1945-1991)

Öz

Avrupa'da savaş sona ermek üzereyken, 19 Mart 1945'te Sovyet Hükümeti, 17 Aralık 1925 tarihli Türk-Sovyet Dostluk ve Saldırmazlık Antlaşmasını feshetme kararını Türk Hükümetine bildirmiştir. Antlaşmanın, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında ortaya çıkan yeni şartlara uygun olmadığı ileri sürülmüştür. 7 Haziran 1945'te Türkiye'nin Moskova Büyükelçisi Seli Sarper Sovyet Dışişleri Bakanı Molotov ile yaptığı görüşmede, Türkiye'nin Sovyet Rusya ile yeniden iyi ilişkiler kurmak istediğini belirtmiş, ancak Molotov, iyi ilişkilerin kurulması ve antlaşmanın yenilenmesi için Boğazlarda üs, ayrıca Kars-Ardahan bölgesini istemiştir. Türkiye'nin bu talepleri kabul etmemesi üzerine antlaşma yenilenmemiştir. Bu olay Türk-Sovyet ilişkilerinde 1953 yılına kadar sürecek gerginliğin başlangıcı olmuştur.

Stalin'in ölümünden sonra Ruslar, Türkiye ile olan ilişkilerini savaş öncesindeki göreceli rahat düzeye kıyasla yeniden inşa etmeye çalıştılar. Fakat Türkler buna karşılık vermede tedbirli davrandılar. 1960 yılı başlarında Sovyet-Amerikan ilişkilerinde gözlenen gelişmeler Türkleri Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ile olan bağımlı ilişkilerini yeniden düşünmeye sevk etti ve Sovyetler Birliğine karşı daha uzlaşmacı bir yaklaşım benimsemelerine yol açtı. Sonuçta, Türk-

Sovyet ilişkileri 1960'lar ve 1970'lerde-Atatürk dönemi dışında en iyi dönemini yaşamış oldu. Batı 1964'te Türklerin Kıbrıs'a müdahalesini engellemek için harekete geçer ve bu da onlara Kıbrıs politikaları için Sovyet desteği aramaları için baskı oluşturur. Türk Dış İşleri Bakanı Kasım 1964'te Moskova'yı ziyaret ettiğinde, Ruslar "iki toplumlu" formülü kabul ettiler. Üst düzey karşılıklı ziyaretler Ocak 1965'te Nikolai Podgorny liderliğindeki bir Yüksek Sovyet delegasyonunun Türkiye'yi ziyareti ile devam etti. Mayıs 1965'te Sovyet Dış İşleri Bakanı Türkiye'yi ziyaret etti ve Türkiye Başbakanı Ağustos 1965'te Sovyetler Birliği'ni ziyaret ettiğinde iki ülke Türkiye'ye yapılacak Sovyet yardımının tedariki konusunda prensipte anlaştı.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Rusya, Sovyetler Birliği, Türk-Sovyet ilişkileri, Türk Dış Politikası, Sovyet Dış Politikası

The Period of 1945-1953

Traditionally, Soviet attitude to Turkey was governed by strategic concepts as a result of the latter's possession of the Black Sea Straits, and from its proximity to vital targets in Ukraine and Transcaucasia. Turco-Soviet enmity thus has deep roots going back to the struggle between the Russian and the Ottoman Empires, which began in the 15th century with the gradual conquest of the Black Sea, Transcaucasia and Balkans by the Turks. However, during the eighteenth and early twentieth century, Russia expanded its territory largely at the expense of the declining Ottoman Empire. However, it was only with the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1917, that the Russian irredentist ambition enshrined in the "**Warm Waters**", the Russian/Soviet desire to gain access to the Mediterranean, was effectively abandoned.¹ As a result, Turco-Soviet relations had their best time in the Atatürk era and later in the 1960s and 1970s as well.

However, after the Second World War, Turco-Soviet relations underwent a decline. The Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hasan Saka, who was in London in January 1946, was able to put the Turkish case to the Secretary of State, who, in turn, informed him of the

¹ FO371/59231, R 17969/6/44, "The Bosphorus and the Dardanelles", 6 January 1947. FCO51/244/RR6/12, "Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971". Also, see FCO51/296/RR6/4, "Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972". Baskın Oran (ed.), Türk Dış Politikası, Cilt-I: 1919-1980 (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2003), p. 499-520.

apparently reassuring discussions he had had with Marshal Stalin in Moscow and assured him of British interest in the matter. In a second interview with the Secretary of State a month later, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs enquired whether the British Government would consider adapting the Anglo-Turkish alliance to modern conditions. This suggestion was later embodied by the Turkish Ambassador in London in a memorandum which contained the alternative suggestion that the Secretary of State should re-affirm in Parliament the value which the British Government attached to the Turkish alliance. In reply to these suggestions, the Secretary of State stated that while the British Government attached great importance to the principle of the Anglo-Turkish alliance, the second alternative appeared more preferable to him, inasmuch as he wished to have further opportunity for observing the development of United Nations before undertaking discussions about the modification of the treaty, a reply which, with the Secretary of State's friendly references to Turkey in a speech in the House of Commons on 21 February, fully satisfied the Turkish Government.²

By the publication in the press of articles on Armenian and Georgian claims to Turkey's eastern provinces, and by a constant barrage of hostile propaganda over the wireless, the Soviet claims were kept continually before the eyes of the Turkish Government and people. This campaign drew indignant rejoinders from the Turkish newspapers, with the result that a sustained press war developed between the two countries which in itself made difficult any improvement in their official relations. Anti-communist demonstrations organised by students also took place in Ankara, Iskenderun and other cities. These Turkish counter-attacks drew a protest from the Soviet Embassy in January and the Turkish Government found it appropriate to invite the veteran journalist Hüseyin Cahid Yalçın, who had been an outspoken supporter of the Allied cause throughout the war and had now become the most bitter critic of the Soviet Union, to undertake a brief tour abroad in the

² FO371/67305B, "Review of Events in Turkey-1946", by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 359-382.

hope that in his absence the press war might die down and further provocation be avoided. These hopes, however, proved in vain.³

Armenian irredentism was another of the weapons in Moscow's armoury of propaganda against Turkey. During the winter of 1946, the Soviet Consul-General in Istanbul had opened registration lists for Armenians wishing to return to Soviet Armenia. This created some excitement at the time, but no obstacles were placed in the way of would-be emigrants and the general feeling was that, although the Soviet action was, given the circumstances, rather provocative, Turkey would be better off without those elements in its Armenian minority who had sympathies with communism. The Soviet Consul-General claimed that as many as 8,000 Armenians had been registered, while Turkish sources put the number at no more than 1,400. Whatever the real figure, no steps were taken to include the would-be emigrants from Turkey in the convoys leaving from Greece, the Levant States and elsewhere. Later in the summer, considerable resentment was caused by the news that the French Communist Party had organised a meeting demanding the cession of the three eastern provinces to Soviet Armenia and the creation of an independent Kurdistan.⁴

The Soviet occupation of Iranian Azerbaijan intensified the Turks' feeling of encirclement and the fear that a rising tide of aggression was now flowing strongly alike round its eastern and western frontiers. The proceedings of the Security Council in New York were followed with close but sceptical interest and, as the year drew on, the conviction that Soviet ambitions were of a nature too fundamental and obdurate to be checked by peaceful persuasion gradually gained ground and found open expression in the Turkish press.⁵

Evidence began to come to light in the early summer that direct Soviet influence in Turkish internal affairs which had suffered a setback in the previous autumn was again becoming active. Two new periodicals, "*Gün*" and "*Gerçek*", the contents of which followed the usual Communist directives, appeared and to some extent made good

³ FO371/67305B, "Review of Events in Turkey-1946", by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947.

⁴ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Kamuran Gürün, *Türk-Sovyet İlişkileri* (Ankara: TTK Yayınları, 1991), p. 276-316.

⁵ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947.

the disappearance of *"Tan"* and *"La Turquie"*, which had been suppressed in the previous autumn. There were, furthermore, indications that serious attempts were being made to infiltrate crypto-communist elements into the ranks of the Democratic Party, with a view either to splitting the Party or to controlling its leadership. Indeed, after the elections were over, it was discovered that the funds expended by Soviet sources on behalf of the Democrats in eastern Turkey had exceeded the propaganda expenses of the Republican Party, although there was no evidence to suggest that any collusion existed between the Soviet agents and the Democratic leaders or indeed that the latter were even aware of the insidious support which they were receiving.⁶

The real purpose of the Soviet campaign was gradually becoming clear. Although the Soviet Ambassador in Ankara had adopted the strange attitude that he could not, in view of the bad relations between the two countries, pay an official visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he had in the winter intimated to Sumer, the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, that the Soviet Government would be prepared to drop temporarily the question of territorial claims in order to achieve a settlement of the Straits question. In June, Vinogradov went further and in conversation with the Prime Minister, Saraçoğlu, declared that a solution of the present deadlock was to be found in the rectification of the frontiers and the cession of a base to Russia in time of war. When, however, these claims were dismissed out of hand by Saraçoğlu, Vinogradov shifted his ground and said that if Turkey would but admit that the Straits were of greater importance to the Soviet Union than to any other country, and would agree to negotiate with Russia on that basis, there would be no more talk of the three provinces or of a military base. The Prime Minister replied that the Soviet demands must be completely withdrawn before any answer could be given to such a proposal. Suggestions similar to those put forward by Vinogradov were also made to the Turks about the same time by the Yugoslav Ambassador and the Polish Chargé d'Affaires, and indeed, the whole corps of Soviet satellite Representatives appeared to have received instructions at this time to take soundings of the Turkish Government.

⁶ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Oran, Op. Cit., p. 499-520.

The same technique had already been employed in the case of the Bulgarian Minister who, in the winter, had suggested that Turkish security was to be found in association with other Black Sea powers and added that one of the principal obstacles to a Turco-Soviet rapprochement was the continuance in office of the Prime Minister, Saraçoğlu, an indiscretion which earned him an immediate rebuke. More surprising was a similar sounding by the Swedish Minister, who, however, repented and begged that his impertinence should be forgotten.⁷

These conversations and the general tone of Soviet propaganda tended to confirm the view expressed privately by the Turkish Ambassador to Moscow (who was in Istanbul during the summer) that the real object of the Soviet offensive was to frighten the Turkish Government which would emerge from the elections with excessive demands which could later be dropped in exchange for a close understanding. This, of course, would include the severance of the British alliance. In fact, Mr Sarper never returned to Moscow after this visit to Istanbul but was shortly afterwards appointed Minister to Rome. He was replaced in Moscow by Faik Zihni Akdur, the then Turkish Minister to Sofia, who left for his new post in November.⁸

During the summer interest in the Straits question quickened for, under the terms of the Montreux Convention, the Convention would automatically continue in force for a further period of five years unless a demand for a revision of these terms was made by any of the signatory powers before 9 August. The question was therefore whether the Soviet Union would decide to demand such modification before the specified date; and on 8 August the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Ankara handed in a note demanding modification of the Convention. After citing violations of the Convention alleged to have been permitted by Turkey during the war, the note proposed five changes:

⁷ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Galia Golan, *Soviet Policies in the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 29-43.

⁸ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Oran, *Op. Cit.*, p. 499-520.

1. the Straits to remain always open to merchant shipping of all countries and
2. to the passage of warships of the Black Sea Powers,
3. the passage of warships of other Powers to be forbidden except in cases specially provided for,
4. the Straits regime to be within the competence of Turkey and the other Black Sea Powers,
5. Turkey and the Soviet Union as the Powers most interested should by their common means ensure the defence of the Straits and prevent their utilisation by other states for purposes hostile to the Black Sea Powers.⁹

Under Article 29 of the Convention this demand for revision should have been supported by one or two of the signatory Powers (according to the nature of the modification) and notified to all contracting parties; the neglect of this procedure was not however used as an objection to the Soviet proposals.

The first three proposals had been suggested to the Turkish Government by the United States Government in November 1945, and the controversy centred essentially round the fourth and fifth demands. The Turkish Prime Minister referred to the Soviet note in a declaration of policy on 14 August in which he said that Turkey was bound by international convention and would defend its sovereign rights but was prepared to negotiate a revision of the Montreux Convention with her Allies and other interested states. He modified his draft in accordance with suggestions by the British Government. The Soviet authorities simultaneously intensified their nerve warfare first by claiming to have discovered in the German archives reports from the former German Ambassador in Ankara about Saraçoğlu having suggested the dismemberment of Russia; and secondly, by announcing that the British Military Authorities had a base at Çanakkale and Radar stations in Thrace and the Black Sea area operated by British personnel, that they

⁹ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. George Lenczowski, *The Middle East in the World Affairs*, 4th edition, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 134-136.

controlled the aerodrome at Yeşilköy and had 5,000 advisers and instructors in Turkey. The Anatolian News Agency denied the first report and the Foreign Office denied the latter which has nevertheless frequently been repeated in Soviet propaganda.¹⁰

The Soviet note, copies of which had been delivered by the Soviet Embassies to the British and the U.S. Governments also, was discussed by the two Secretaries of State in Paris, and the British and American Ambassadors in Ankara gave the Turkish Government substantially similar advice as to their reply. Both Governments expressed to the Turks their own willingness to take part in a conference and advised the Turkish Government to express their readiness to do the same while making clear that this offer did not imply agreement with any specific Soviet proposals.¹¹

The British Government, by acknowledging the Soviet communication, pointed out that the agreement at Potsdam allowed for direct conversations between each of the three Governments and the Turkish Government but had not, as the Soviet note stated, provided for negotiations. It was pointed out that the Soviet proposals did not mention the United Nations with whose purposes and principles any modification of the Montreux Convention must be consistent. Finally, the British Government pointed out that it had long been internationally recognised that the Straits regime concerned other states besides the Black Sea Powers and Turkey and further expressed the view that Turkey as the territorial power concerned should continue to be responsible for the defence and control of the Straits. The American reply also insisted on the concern of other than Black Sea powers with the Straits and on the necessity of relating the Straits regime to the United Nations and said that any aggression against the Straits would clearly be a matter for action by the Security Council, Both Governments stated their willingness to participate in any eventual conference.¹²

¹⁰ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Golan, Op. Cit., p. 29-43.

¹¹ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947.

¹² FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Oran, Op. Cit., p. 499-520.

The Turkish reply, handed to the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Ankara on 22 August, contained 20 pages. The first half refuted in detail the Russian allegations of wartime violations of the Convention, maintaining that in so far as technical violations had taken place, these proved the necessity of bringing the Annex to the Convention up to date; they did not believe that the Convention itself needed to be revised or that Turkish control had been inadequate. The reply nevertheless accepted the first three Soviet proposals as a basis for discussion but rejected the fourth and fifth proposals. The fourth proposal ignored the fact that the Convention was in force until at least 1956 and ignored the interests of the other signatory powers. The fifth proposal was incompatible with Turkey's inalienable rights of sovereignty and with its security. The surest guarantee for the Soviet Union lay in the restoration of friendly relations with Turkey and in recourse to the United Nations. The texts of the American and Turkish replies were published; that of the British Government's reply was not published until November 1946, though of course communicated to the Turkish Government, but Turkish opinion was much reassured by the Secretary of State's statement of the British case in the House of Commons on 23 October 1946.¹³

Nerve-warfare continued in the shape of rumours, one of which, traced to the Soviet Consulate General in Istanbul, was that the Russian would attack Istanbul on September 13th or 18th and that there were large concentrations of armoured troops on the Bulgarian frontier. The Turkish Government took special precautions, a boom was laid in the Bosphorus and the frontier garrisons were in a state of alert for nearly three weeks. On 25 September the Soviet Charge d'Affaires in Ankara handed in a second note of considerable length. Although much of it consisted of arguments against the Turkish Government's defence of their control of the Straits during the war, the note was rather more conciliatory in tone and noted with satisfaction the Turkish Government's acceptance of the first three proposals as a basis for discussion. The note contended that as the Black Sea was an inland sea, the Straits were different from other waterways, and the special

¹³ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Kuniholm, *Op. Cit.*, p. 359-382.

position of Black Sea Powers had been recognised by treaties between Turkey and the Soviet Union in 1921 and with the Transcaucasian and Ukrainian Republics in 1922. It complained that the Turks had rejected the fifth proposal without knowing the concrete suggestions of the Soviet Government. Obviously alluding to the allegations referred to the British military establishments in Turkey, the note said that if Turkey took military measures in the Straits in conjunction with Non-Black Sea Powers, such action would be inconsistent with the security of the Black Sea Powers. The note concluded that the Soviet proposals were in accord with the United Nations and that a conference should be preceded by direct conversations between the Turkish Government and the Potsdam Powers.¹⁴

The Turkish Prime Minister's first idea in reaction to the second note was to reply briefly that there was no purpose in continuing the conversation as the Soviet point of view had been noted and fully discussed the British Ambassador recommended that a categorical refusal to discuss specific proposals in any circumstances, or too curt a reply, should be avoided and suggested a general line which the Turkish Government adopted. Both the British and the United States Governments restated their own views to the Soviet Government; the American note adding that Turkey should continue to be primarily responsible for the defence of the Straits and that in the event of an attack or threat of an attack action should be taken by the Security Council.¹⁵

The Turkish reply which was given on 18 October stated (in accordance with the suggestions made by the British Government) that the recent exchanges of notes between the two Governments had clarified the respective points of view in accordance with the Potsdam Agreement and that the signatory state desiring modification of the Convention should now take the initiative foreseen by the Convention for summoning a conference, including the United States of America, for a revision. In addition, the Turkish note repudiated in details both the Soviet charges of wartime violations of the Convention and the

¹⁴ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Oran, Op. Cit., p. 499-520.

¹⁵ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947.

thesis that the Straits were the exclusive concern of the Black Sea Powers. It repeated that joint defence of the Straits would mean the derogation of Turkish sovereignty but that the Turkish Government would defend the Straits in the future as in the past and declared that the Soviet note's allusion to military measures in concert with non-Black Sea Powers was totally unfounded. The claim that the Soviet proposals were compatible with the United Nations could not be reconciled with a proposal which ignored the existence of the United Nations and implied the violation of a neighbour's sovereignty.¹⁶

The Soviet Military Attaché informed the Turkish Director of Military Intelligence that the fifth Soviet proposal was really only a suggestion that the Turkish Government should undertake to reinforce their defences at any given point indicated by the Soviet Government; he was told that this proposal was unacceptable.¹⁷

On 26 October 1946, the British Ambassador in Moscow was informed in a note from the Soviet Government that the latter did not share the opinion of the British Government that direct conversations between the three Governments represented at Potsdam and the Turkish Government were completed, and that therefore they considered a conference would be premature. On 28 November the British Ambassador in Moscow informed the Soviet Government in a brief written reply that while taking note of their views, the British Government adhered to their opinion that there was no longer any purpose in continuing direct correspondence between each of the three Governments and the Turkish Government and that any further discussion should take place at an international conference. The Turkish and American notes had remained without reply, but President İnönü took the opportunity of the reopening of Parliament on 1 November stated that Turkey agreed that the Montreux Convention needed adaptation to modern conditions and would welcome modifications consistent with the legitimate interests of the parties and its territorial integrity and sovereign rights.¹⁸

¹⁶ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Oran, *Op. Cit.*, p. 499-520.

¹⁷ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947.

¹⁸ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir Kelly, 4 February 1947. Golan,

The interest shown by the United States in the Straits question greatly encouraged both the Turkish Government and public opinion. It had already become customary in general policy statements by the President and Prime Minister to lay special stress on their desire for friendship with the United States immediately after the reference to the Alliance with Great Britain. As the Straits controversy developed, the fact was much noticed and complained of that in addition to the interest shown officially by the United States Government, the American Press gave much greater prominence to the subject and to the texts of the respective notes than did the Press in the United Kingdom. The visits of the United States warships Missouri to Istanbul in April and Randolph, Fargo, Perry and Donner to Smyrna in November, were greeted with the greatest enthusiasm, and the American statements on the latter occasion that the call was quite informal and without special significance were ignored and the maximum of public welcome and hospitality was offered. The growing American interest in Turkey, primarily of course a reflex of the post-war post disillusionment about Soviet aims and activities generally was stimulated by the favourable impression formed by visiting American journalists, notably Mr Knickerbocker and Mr Sedgwick. These devoted themselves to creating in the minds of their numerous readers a picture of Turkey as the only neighbouring state that was standing up to Russia and as one which was setting an example in modernisation and real democratic experiment to all the countries of the Near and Middle East and South-eastern Europe. They owed this impression largely to the facilities for meeting Turks, arranged for them by the British Embassy, and the same favourable impression was formed by a number of visiting British journalists, including Phillips Price, and Kimche, as well as Buckley, Gallacher and Howe, so that Turkey seemed to have had a remarkably better press on both sides of the Atlantic during the year under review than might easily have been the case. This was particularly so in the United States where, as the U.S. Ambassador informed the British Ambassador, the typical association of ideas had been "Turkey-Armenia-atrocities".¹⁹

Op. Cit., p. 29-43.

¹⁹ FO371/67305B, Review of Events in Turkey-1946, by Sir David Kelly, 4 February 1947.

The U.S. Ambassador, Edwin Wilson, received the British Ambassador privately on the day after the latter's arrival and invited him to lunch before he had presented his credentials; and from the very first expressed his great interest in increasing by every possible means all kinds of support of the United States for Turkey as the indispensable rampart against Soviet expansion over the whole Near and Middle East. Byrnes showed his sympathy with this point of view in conversations with the leading members of the British Delegation in Paris, not merely on the specific issues of the Straits, but also in regard to the possibility of assisting the Turks in modernizing their defences.

In March 1947, the Truman declaration had a profound psychological effect in allaying the anxieties caused by the Soviet claims on the Straits and the eastern territories, by the Soviet machination in Azerbaijan, by the tightening hold on the Balkan satellites and the open wound in Greece with its threat of a Russian incursion into the Aegean. The fears which were expressed vociferously by Moscow radio, that the United States Aid agreement, which was signed in Ankara on 12 July, would transform Turkey into an American satellite. However, the psychological effect of the American Aid programme and later of the Marshall offer²⁰, and the re-assurances of British fidelity to the alliance had restored Turkish morale regarding direct aggression by the Soviet Union.²¹

In 1948, Turkish interest in foreign affairs was based on fear of Russia. Therefore, all international events were instinctively judged in relation to the fear of Russian aggression. It was therefore understandable that the Turks continued, as in the previous year, to seek constantly for positive reassurances that they could rely on the Anglo-Turkish alliance of 1939. They informed both the British and the United States governments that they regarded the proposed Atlantic

²⁰ Though the initial omission of Turkey from the list of recipients of Marshall Aid was rectified, the amount finally allocated caused great disappointment in Turkey. Marshall Aid to Turkey had been generous, though the Turks were inclined to complain that they did not receive as much as their value to Western Europe and the sacrifices they were making warrant. See FO371/78661/R1033/1011/44.

²¹ FO371/72540/R840, "Annual Report for Turkey, 1947", From Sir David Kelly to Attlee, 15 January 1948. Kuniholm, Op. Cit., p. 359-382.

Pact as calculated to increase the danger of aggression against Turkey unless it were linked up with a Mediterranean Pact including Turkey.²²

However, the feeling of isolation and imminent danger lay in the roots of Turkish foreign policy in 1949. There had been no change in Turkey's relations with the Soviet Union. But nobody had attempted to conceal the real state of hostility between the two countries, and the Turkish press, including the semi-official *Ulus*, responded vigorously to propaganda from Moscow. It was only natural therefore that Turkey tried throughout the year to obtain some more solid assurances of Western support against possible Russian aggression. It made clear its desire to be included in the Atlantic Pact, or at least to be associated with it by some form of Mediterranean pact. Exclusion from the NATO was therefore a severe blow, in spite of the assurances on Turkey's position which accompanied the signature of the pact. Turkish statesmen tried to pretend to their own people that the Anglo-Franco-Turkish Alliance (which the French had recently affirmed was still binding on them) and the Truman doctrine gave all the guarantees needed and that membership of the pact would merely have entailed inconvenient commitments. However, they adopted a different line in speaking to the representatives of the Western Powers. Their disappointment over the Atlantic Pact caused the Turks to welcome with all the more enthusiasm their admission to the Council of Europe, even though they were somewhat aggrieved by the fact that they had not been invited to be a founder member. The Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs pointed out that Turkey had at last been accepted as a European State and that the crown achievement had thus been made on Atatürk's policy of westernisation.²³

In 1950, Turkey's relations with the Soviet Union remained unchanged, and though an article in *Red Fleet* in April, insisting once again on the need for revision of the Straits Convention, caused some anxiety, there was no renewal of direct Russian pressure.²⁴

²² FO371/78661/R1033/1011/44, "Turkey: Annual Review for 1948", From Sir David Kelly to Bevin, 28 January 1949.

²³ FO371/87933/RK1011/1, "Turkey: Annual Review for 1949", From Sir Noel Charles to McNeil, 7 January 1950. Oran, *Op. Cit.*, p. 499-520.

²⁴ FO371/95267/RK1011/1, "Turkey: Annual Review for 1950", From Sir Noel Charles to

In 1951, the impending entry of Turkey into the NATO and its support for the Middle East Command proposals produced a renewal of Soviet pressure, which had not been directly exerted against Turkey since 1946. In November the Turkish Government were informed that the Soviet Union regarded the adherence of Turkey to the NATO and the construction of bases on Turkish soil with American assistance as evidence of the design of the imperialist powers to make use of Turkey for aggressive purposes against the Soviet Union. This note was followed on 24 November by one denouncing the proposed Middle East Command as aggressive in intention and stating that Turkey, together with the other founder members of the Command, would bear the responsibility for the situation which might arise from its establishment. The Turkish Government, fortified by their increased feeling of security, met these attacks with great firmness and confidence. Their reply to the first Russian note placed the responsibility for the world situation at that time on the Soviet Government themselves and affirmed that the military measures which Turkey was taking were designed entirely for self-defence. In their reply about the Middle East Command the Turkish Government were anxious to go further and to counter-attack by exposing Soviet machinations in Arab countries. However, although they did not believe that the tone of their reply would affect Soviet policy, the Turkish Government did not wish to appear provocative by diverging too far from the attitude of the other three governments (the British, the United States and the French governments). The reply eventually sent was therefore expressed in more moderate terms, and on 10 December, the Foreign Minister Fuad Köprülü stated that Turkey did not intend to cede to other nations' bases on Turkish territory and that only in the event of aggression would such bases be used in collaboration with Turkey's allies.²⁵

In 1952, Turkey's inclusion in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, her sponsorship of the Middle East Defence Organisation, and her efforts to promote Balkan defence did not escape the notice of its communist neighbours. Early in the year both Soviet Russia and Bulgaria

Bevin, 13 January 1951.

²⁵ FO371/101848/WK1011/1, "Turkey: Annual Review for 1951", by Knox Helm, 2 January 1952.

protested against her subservience to the aggressive designs of Anglo-American imperialism; and during the following months Soviet policy towards Turkey was marked by sporadic outbursts of abusive propaganda.²⁶

The Period of 1953-1960

In 1953, Turkey came in for its share of the Soviet “peace offensive” following the death of Stalin. On 31 May, the Soviet Government sent a note informing the Turkish Government that it had no territorial claims on Turkey as it now considered it possible “to ensure the security of the Soviet Union in the area of the Straits on conditions acceptable alike to the Soviet Union and to Turkey”. In July, the Turkish Government sent an inoffensive reply, expressing satisfaction at the renunciation of territorial claims and reminding the Soviet Government that the Straits question was regulated by the Montreux Convention. This was immediately followed by a second Soviet note protesting against the then impending British and United States naval visits to İstanbul. The Turks retorted that these visits were permitted under the Montreux Convention and that they were, therefore, none of Russia’s business. A further Soviet note on the same subject was left unanswered. The Turkish Government was in no way impressed by these Russian manoeuvres. It was convinced that there had been no change of heart at Moscow; its only concern was that the apparently more conciliatory Soviet line might, by confusing Western opinion, undermine the resolution of the Western powers to build up their defences and open the way to negotiations which might involve concessions to Russia. Turkey remained firmly convinced that it was to the growth of the strength of the West that has been due any modifications which there may have been in Soviet tactics, and that the moral to be drawn was that the Western powers should steadfastly pursue their policy of further strengthening their unity and power.²⁷

²⁶ FO371/107547/WK1011/1, “Annual Report on Turkey for 1952”, From Knox Helm to Anthony Eden, 9 January 1953.

²⁷ FO371/112921/WK1011/1, “Annual Report on Turkey for 1953”, From Knox Helm to Antony Eden, 1 January 1954. Robert O. Freedman, *Moscow and the Middle East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 15-25.

In 1954, the Russian threat remained the main preoccupation of the Turks in the field of foreign policy. They were convinced that any changes that there may have been in Russian methods (for example, in the more friendly tone which the Moscow radio adopted in 1954 on Turkey's National Day) were the result of the progressive strengthening of the western Powers and reflect no change in the basic Soviet objectives. They therefore considered it essential that there should be no relaxing of the free world's efforts to increase its strength and unity; and they accordingly continued to play their full part in the affairs of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.²⁸

In 1955, Turkey's traditional mistrust of Russia remained unchanged, and though on several occasion the Russians, through one channel or another, indicated their desire for closer cultural, economic or political relations with Turkey, the Turks maintained their attitude that improvement of relations between Russia and Turkey could come about only through an improvement of relations between Russia and the West as a whole.²⁹

In 1956, friendly approaches to Turkey from Russia continued through most of the year and included hints of large-scale economic assistance. Turkey maintained her attitude of cold reserve and became increasingly perturbed as the year advanced over growing Russian penetration of the Middle East area, especially in Egypt and Syria. To Turkey's relief the year passed without any of the signatories of the Montreux (Straits) Convention availing itself of the option under article 29 of asking for an amendment of any of its provisions.³⁰

In 1957, towards Russia Turkey maintained its attitude of cool reserve. Repeated assurances from Russia of its readiness to give economic aid to Turkey led to a visit to Moscow by a delegation of the "İşbank" and the conclusion of an agreement under which Russia undertook to build a glass, and a caustic soda factory in Turkey.

²⁸ FCO9/RK1011/1, "Turkey: Annual Review for 1954", From Sir James Bowker to Sir Anthony Eden, 7 January 1955.

²⁹ FO371/123999/RK1011/1, "Annual Review for 1955", From James Bowker to Selwyn Lloyd, 16 January 1956. Freedman, Op. Cit., p. 15-25.

³⁰ FO371/130174/RK1011/1, "Turkey: Annual Review for 1956", From James Bowker to Selwyn Lloyd, 5 February 1957.

However, the Russian suggestion for talks on political questions received a reply that the Turkish Government did not consider that there were any political questions to be discussed between the two countries. The Syrian crisis produced a letter from Bulganin to Menderes containing scarcely veiled threats of the consequences of a Turkish move against Syria, to which Menderes returned a firm reply. Later Menderes was among the Heads of Governments of the NATO Powers to receive a further letter from Bulganin on the eve of the meeting of the NATO Heads of Government in Paris in December 1957 in which he was warned of the dangers to Turkey of tying herself to America. Menderes continued to dominate the Turkish scene in 1957. He had steered Turkey through some vexing international problems. He had continued Turkish support for NATO and the Baghdad Pact; he dealt coolly and steadily with propaganda campaign mounted against Turkey (inter alia) by Soviet Russia over Syria, in the early autumn, and he had kept his end up well in the exchanges of letters between Soviet and Western leaders.³¹

In both internal and external affairs, 1958 was a year of importance for Turkey. However, the Turco-Soviet relations were stable.³² In 1959, Turkey's main points of interest were its policy towards the Arab world and its attitude towards a détente between East and West. The Russian threat was a common factor and overshadowed anything else in Turkish minds. Nevertheless, while seeking to protect itself against this by strengthening the organisation of CENTO and encouraging Iranian resistance to Russian overtures, Turkey showed restraint in its attitude towards the Arab world. This close identity of views with the West was not reflected in the Turkish attitude towards a détente. While anxious not to be left out if the West should come to an arrangement with the Soviet Union, the Turks nevertheless found it difficult to overcome their traditional suspicions of Russia. In view of their geographical position, it was natural enough that they should take a parochial view of the Russian threat and a rapprochement would be against all their best instincts. The Turks, however, were essentially realists and it was

³¹ FO371/136450/RK1011/1, "Annual Report on Turkey for 1957", From James Bowker to Selwyn Lloyd, 4 February 1958. Oran, Op. Cit., p. 499-520.

³² FO371/144739/RK1011/1, "Annual Report for Turkey for 1958", 17 February 1959.

difficult to believe that they would risk going very far towards hitching their wagon to the Soviet star whatever the incentives.³³

As the year went on Turkey came to be faced with a new and exacting test of political skill and steadiness resulting from the beginnings of détente between the West and Russia. The idea of a thaw in the cold war came to be regarded with suspicion by the Turks, partly because they believed that they knew best how to deal with the Russians and they did not altogether approve of West's ways of doing this, partly because they had in rather characteristic Turkish fashion committed themselves root and branch to an extreme anti-Russian position and feared some loss of face in abandoning it, and partly because in a general détente their geographical and ideological position might not command so high a reward as it was at that time. Turkish feelings of concern on these subjects manifested themselves in two ways. One was an increasingly impatient series of remarks to the British and the Americans and, as occasion offered, to some of other NATO governments, to the effect that the United States, the United Kingdom and France were in danger of setting up a kind of world directorate, in which Russia would be invited to join. Secondly, Turkey had been subjected to the usual Russian inducements of the "stick and carrot" variety, with notes of protest about rocket bases followed rapidly by offers of economic aid and invitations to the exchange of high-level visits. The Turkish government had rebuffed the former with no more difficulty than on many more serious occasions in the past, but they had felt it necessary to make some show of response to the more friendly aspects of the Russian offensive. They had accepted some individual items of economic aid, such as the building of a factory; they sent the ageing Minister of Health on a visit to Moscow, which proved such a shock to the old gentleman that he had a heart attack on arrival; the Turkish Foreign Minister and the Soviet Ambassador exchanged dinners; the latter said some words of warning to the effect that Turkey should not risk missing the co-existence band-wagon; the Turks replied with some guarded expressions of satisfaction at the possibility of a lowering of tension, but with clear statements that they did not intend

³³ FO371/153030/RK1011/1, Minute by E. N. Smith, 9 February 1960.

to consider coming to any separate agreement and so weakening the Western front.³⁴

It would have been insulting to the rulers of Turkey to go much further than this in the direction of forming a true friendship with Russia, and in the event that the international climate genuinely improved they would be faced with painful decisions. It was expected that they would make their decisions like statesmen in most other countries, on the basis of their view of Turkey's interests. The Prime Minister Menderes believed that he should remain in power because he was best able to manage the revival of Turkey and its growth into a more fully developed power; the belief that a future for Turkey of the kind that he wanted depended largely on fairly rapid economic development; his belief in the Western alignment of Turkey as providing the only possible defence from communist Russia and at the same time a just acceptable level of economic aid to make industrial development possible; the belief that Turkey's future should be Turkish and not merely an inferior copy of the West. If correct, the continuation of Turkey's alignment at that time was not to be taken for granted in all circumstances but is determined by a number of factors which may not always remain the same. These factors can be listed as follows: if, because of international détente, defence against Communists Russia no longer appeared to be such a weighty necessity; if, for the same reason, the Western Powers no longer seemed likely to provide it in so satisfactory a form as at present; if the West appeared too seriously to disregard Turkey's claim to equality of treatment in consultation about summit meetings or other large-scale international developments; if it began to be felt that Turkey's economic development could no longer be achieved at a satisfactory rate with the help of the West alone and that a useful contribution to it could be obtained without too much danger from the East; if the growth of Turkishness in certain aspects of the Turkish state caused serious lack of harmony between Turkey and the Western democracies.³⁵

³⁴ FO371/153030/RK1011/1, "Annual Political Review for Turkey, 1959", From Sir Bernard Burrows to Selwyn Lloyd, 26 January 1960.

³⁵ FO371/153030/RK1011/1, "Annual Political Review for Turkey, 1959", From Sir Bernard Burrows to Selwyn Lloyd, 26 January 1960.

The year of 1960 began with a high state of tension between the parties and with an election expected either at some time in 1960 or early in 1961. Many external observers thought that an election was likely to result in a further Democrat victory. But the government seemed to have come to the conclusion sometime early in the year that they could not take the risk of going to the country, either because they might lose or because an election would give rise to disorders which the army would be unwilling to suppress for the benefit of the Democrat Party. They were determined not to take the risk of losing because of Menderes' almost evangelical belief that he was destined to rebuild Turkey and because latterly he and other leaders of the party came to feel that some of their activities would not bear scrutiny by an unfriendly administration. At the same time, they became more and more upset by the criticism and propaganda of the Opposition and were soon drawn into a vicious circle of repression. In fact, they worried about the thought of losing their power and hastened that event by the unwise measures which they took to prevent. Some of them were of the opinion that, if the new rules did not provide a satisfactory means of ensuring victory for their band, then the rules must be changed; and this was what in effect the government set out to do by using their majority vote in the Assembly to set up a parliamentary commission, staffed entirely by members of the Democrat Party, to investigate the political activities of the Opposition.³⁶

The point of no return was probably reached with the grant to this commission of practically unlimited powers over the political life of the country and the immediate use of these powers to forbid all political activity, and even the reporting in the press of parliamentary debates with regard to the commission's activities. It was one of the government's more extraordinary mis-judgements to believe that they could impose this kind of political standstill by purely political means, in other words without the use of military force or of the methods of coercion which most other dictatorships have found to be necessary. It seemed in retrospect that they could never properly have analysed the

³⁶ FO371/160212/RK1011/1, "Annual Report on Turkey for 1960", From Sir Bernard Burrows to the Foreign Office, 6 January 1961. Musa Qasımlı, Türkiye-Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyetleri Birliği İlişkileri, 1960-1980 (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Yayınları, 2013), p. 23-96.

power situation in the country. The revolution came about because the Army finally realized that passive resistance to the government's orders to repress demonstrations was not enough to solve the crisis in which Turkey found itself and that they must instead take positive action to change the situation.³⁷

There were signs towards the end that even in foreign policy the strain was becoming apparent. Menderes was heard to mention rather enviously on more than one occasion now much easier it was for a totalitarian system like Russia to carry out measures of economic development in a sort time, and his agreement to exchange visits with Khrushchev may be regarded not only as a prudent withdrawal from Turkey's previously extreme anti-Russian position, but also as a hope of distraction from the internal crisis.³⁸

An Assessment of 1945-1960 Period

The impact of the Revolution on Turkey's foreign relations was remarkably small. As already mentioned, the government of Menderes had decided shortly before their fall to try and break the ice with Russia, but nothing came of this. Almost the first statements of the Revolutionary government were to the effect that they remained faithful to their alliances with the West (NATO and CENTO), but that there might be nuances of difference in the application of their foreign policy. It was understood that these might be found largely in a greater suppleness in the handling of relations with neighbouring states, i.e. Russia and the Arab world. It was, in fact, been hard to detect any changes at all. The Russians thought they had an opportunity to improve their position and pressed very hard, probably too hard for their own good, to persuade Turkey to accept large scale economic aid and exchange of top-level visits. Both were refused and Turkey's policy of maintaining its Western connexion unimpaired, but so far as this

³⁷ FO371/160212/RK1011/1, "Annual Report on Turkey for 1960", From Sir Bernard Burrows to the Foreign Office, 6 January 1961.

³⁸ FO371/160212/RK1011/1, "Annual Report on Turkey for 1960", From Sir Bernard Burrows to the Foreign Office, 6 January 1961.

allowed, of normalizing trans-frontier relations with Russia was ably and firmly stated in a letter from General Gürsel to Khrushchev.³⁹

Introduction: From Cold War to Détente (1960-1991)

Traditionally, Soviet attitude to Turkey was governed by strategic concepts, as a result of the latter's possession of the Black Sea Straits, and from its proximity to vital targets in Ukraine and Transcaucasia. Even during the period of friendship between Russia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO), Moscow was forced to adopt less ambitious aims and to attempt to bring Turkey back to a more neutral political position, by force or otherwise, and to secure the withdrawal of United States bases from Turkish territory. The Soviet Union was also concerned about Turkey's economic links with Europe as a member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). After the death of Stalin, the Russians realised that they had to wait. However, during the early 1960s, Turkey continued to respond to Soviet advances with extreme caution, and the Soviet Union was unwilling to resort to extremes of pressure.⁴⁰

In 1950s was a most unsuccessful period in Soviet-Turkish relations. The opportunity appears to have come with a change in Turkish policy in the 1960s. While the Soviets had been willing and actively seeking improved relations, their interest was presumably sharpened by the changes in Soviet military doctrine in the early 1960s, and as a result, the opening of their Mediterranean naval squadron in 1964, which brought a heightened involvement in the Middle East altogether.⁴¹

The year of 1960 began with a high state of tension between the parties and with an election expected either at some time in 1960 or early in 1961. Many outside observers thought that an election was likely to result in a further Democrat victory. However, the government seemed to have come to the conclusion sometime early in the year that

³⁹ FO371/160212/RK1011/1, "Annual Report on Turkey for 1960", From Sir Bernard Burrows to the Foreign Office, 6 January 1961.

⁴⁰ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FO371/160212/RK1011/1, Annual Report on Turkey for 1960.

⁴¹ Golan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 248.

they could not take the risk of going to the country, either because they might lose or because an election would give rise to disorders which the army would be unwilling to suppress for the benefit of the Democrat Party. They were determined not to take the risk of losing because of Menderes' almost evangelical belief that he was destined to rebuild Turkey and because latterly he and other leaders of the party came to feel that some of their activities would not bear scrutiny by an unfriendly administration. At the same time, they became more and more rattled by the criticism and propaganda of the Opposition and were soon drawn into a vicious circle of repression. In fact, they lost their heads at the thought of losing their power and hastened that event by the unwise measures which they took to prevent. Some of them, if the new rules did not provide a satisfactory means of ensuring victory for their band, then the rules must be changed; and this was what in effect the government set out to do by using their majority vote in the Assembly to set up a parliamentary commission, staffed entirely by members of the Democrat Party, to investigate the political activities of the Opposition.⁴²

The point of no return was probably reached with the grant to this commission of practically unlimited powers over the political life of the country and the immediate use of these powers to forbid all political activity, and even the reporting in the press of parliamentary debates with regard to the commission's activities. It was one of the government's more extraordinary mis-judgements to believe that they could impose this kind of political standstill by purely political means, in other words without the use of military force or of the methods of coercion which most other dictatorships have found to be necessary. It seemed in retrospect that the Democrat Party Government could never properly have analysed the power situation in the country. The revolution came about because the Army finally realized that passive resistance to the government's orders to repress demonstrations was not enough to solve the crisis in which Turkey found itself and that they must instead take positive action to change the situation.⁴³

⁴² FO371/160212/RK1011/1, Annual Report on Turkey for 1960.

⁴³ FO371/160212/RK1011/1, Annual Report on Turkey for 1960.

There were signs towards the end of 1950s that even in foreign policy the strain was beginning to tell. Menderes was heard to mention rather enviously on more than one occasion how much easier it was for a totalitarian system like Russia to carry out measures of economic development in a short time, and his agreement to exchange visits with Khrushchev may be regarded not only as a prudent withdrawal from Turkey's previously extreme anti-Russian position, but also as a hope of distraction from the internal crisis.⁴⁴

The impact of the Revolution on Turkey's foreign relations has been remarkably small. As already mentioned, the government of Menderes had decided shortly before their fall to try and break the ice with Russia, but nothing came of this. Almost the first statements of the Revolutionary government were to the effect that they remained faithful to their alliances with the West (NATO and CENTO), but that there might be nuances of difference in the application of their foreign policy. It was understood that these might be found largely in a greater suppleness in the handling of relations with neighbouring states, i.e. Russia and the Arab world. It has, in fact, been hard to detect any changes at all. The Russians thought they had an opportunity to improve their position and pressed very hard, probably too hard for their own good, to persuade Turkey to accept large scale economic aid and exchange of top-level visits. Both were refused and Turkey's policy of maintaining its Western connexion unimpaired, but so far as this allowed, of normalizing trans-frontier relations with Russia was ably and firmly stated in a letter from General Gürsel to Khrushchev.⁴⁵

The crucial change in the Turkish attitude may be attributable to three developments in 1960s. The first two were the weakening of the CENTO alliance and the US withdrawal of its Jupiter missiles from Turkey at the beginning of 1963. These were interpreted in Ankara as a downgrading of the US commitments to Turkey. Thus, Ankara felt less secure and, therefore, in need of placating the enemy on the border. The third development was the Cyprus issue which erupted into a crisis

⁴⁴ FO371/160212/RK1011/1, Annual Report on Turkey for 1960.

⁴⁵ FO371/160212/RK1011/1, Annual Report on Turkey for 1960.

in 1964 and proved to be the catalyst of shifts in Turkey's relations with both super powers.⁴⁶

The Political Détente between Turkey and the Soviet Union, 1960-1965

The Cuban crisis of 1962 directly affected Soviet-Turkish relations, because at one point the Russians, in an attempt to extract themselves from the crisis, proposed the withdrawal of American Jupiter missiles from Turkey in return for their own retreat from Cuba. The US refused to bargain, despite the fact that they had already tried to obtain Turkish agreement to such a withdrawal and that the missiles had actually been removed early in 1963 since the bases were no longer crucial to American policy after the introduction of Polaris submarines. In their desire to secure at least the denuclearisation, if not the total withdrawal of US bases in Turkey, the Russians had already repeatedly warned that the United States (US) presence could involve Turkey in a nuclear war in which its national interests were not necessarily at stake. The Cuban crisis reinforced this, and Turkish "public opinion" and the Press, which had already printed articles approved of by the Soviet Union, began to criticise Turkey's dependent relationship with the United States. In doing so, they were taking on the opposite stance to the Government, which wished to keep the missiles in an attempt to ensure that the Americans would defend Turkey. It feared that NATO's "flexible response" formula might involve the strategic surrender of Turkish territory. Both because of this, and for fear that the US had actually made a deal with the Russians, the eventual withdrawal of the Jupiter missiles was met with apprehensions.⁴⁷

The Soviet Government, which had previously been rejected when it attempted to arrange a visit by the Turkish Prime Minister in 1960, later reduced its ambitiousness and invited a Turkish Parliamentary delegation to visit Russia in January 1963. Turkey responded slowly to friendly advances made by the Soviet Ambassador, and it accepted the new invitation feeling that a visit by a Parliamentary delegation was "a

⁴⁶ Golan, Op. Cit., p. 248-249.

⁴⁷ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. Also, see FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Fahir Armaoğlu, 20. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi, 1914-1995, (İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları, 2014), p. 543-553.

relatively harmless step". However, the arrival of the delegation on 29 May 1963 in fact represented the beginning of a new phase in Turco-Soviet relations, as Ankara realised that it had been late in comparison to other Western Governments in relaxing its attitude towards the Soviet Union. In their discussions, Suat Hayri Ürgüplü, the leader of the delegation, emphasised the possible role of trade as the basis of peaceful co-operation, while Khrushchev went further to assure him that the Soviet Government would help Turkey economically, adding that Turkey's membership of the Western Alliance did not conflict with the establishment of normal relations. Aware that the Russians might hope to undermine Turkey's loyalty to the West by means of economic aid, however, the Turkish delegation met this offer with a noncommittal response.⁴⁸

However, in spite of the atmosphere of goodwill, on 9 July 1963 the Soviet Union did not prevent itself from accusing Turkey of conspiring with Iraq and Iran against the Kurds. The former regarded the Kurdish war as a possible threat to its southern borders and took the opportunity to berate CENTO as an aggressive organisation. Turkey denied any intention of being involved in any kind of intervention in Northern Iraq. This expression of disapproval gave way in November 1963 to a call for the restoration of friendly relations "on the principles established by Lenin and Ataturk". Significantly, the occasion was the 25th anniversary of the death of Ataturk, and the emphasis of Lenin and Ataturk's friendship was aimed at encouraging the Turks to return to "Kemalist neutrality" in their foreign policy. Moreover, it served to remind the Turks that the two countries had once been friends, and that it was thus reasonable for them to be friends once more.⁴⁹

A development along these lines was hindered at this time by the Soviet attitude on Cyprus. Specifically, the Russians supported the Cyprus Government of Archbishop Makarios, who advocated independence for the island. They were naturally opposed to Enosis, which aimed to draw Cyprus into NATO and thus be the death of AKEL,

⁴⁸ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

⁴⁹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FO371/174971, Annual Review for Turkey for 1963.

the successful Communist Party of Cyprus. Because of the island's strategic geographical position, the Turks were also opposed to Enosis. However, it was their commitment to the Turkish Cypriot minority and the Soviet's support for the Greek Cypriots that brought the two countries into conflict once more. On 19 March 1964, Pravda warned that relations could be damaged by Turkish anti-Sovietism arising out of the Cyprus situation. There had already been concrete evidence of this in the postponements in February of a visit to Turkey by a Soviet Parliamentary delegation and, earlier in March, of a visit to the Soviet Union by Feridun Cemal Erkin, the Turkish Foreign Minister. The situation on the island worsened throughout the year, and in August, the Russians threatened military intervention after a Turkish air strike against Greek Cypriot positions. This threat was followed by the signature of an agreement for the provision of Soviet military aid to the Cyprus Government.⁵⁰

In 1963, Cypriot President Makarios suspended the Constitution, which protected the legal rights of the Turkish community, in a period of civil strife on the Island. Turkey threatened to intervene on behalf of the Turkish Cypriots. Moscow supported Makarios's move and opposed Turkey's intervention. In the summer of 1964, Khrushchev warned Turkey against any foreign intervention on the island, declaring that such intervention would be met with a Soviet response. In the meantime, however, the US had warned Turkey against intervention, suggesting that Ankara could not expect NATO assistance should Turkish moves on Cyprus provoke a Soviet response.⁵¹

While Soviet Policy on Cyprus, viewed by the Turkish Government as part of Soviet penetration of the Eastern Mediterranean, hampered the establishment of closer ties with Turkey desired by the Russians, Anglo-American moves to restrain Turkey from unilateral intervention in Cyprus caused increasing resentment among the Turks. This indignation was worsened by President Johnson's letter of June 1964, in which he informed the Turks that they could not rely on US support should they provoke Soviet military intervention. This letter

⁵⁰ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Armaoğlu, Op. Cit., p. 694-739.

⁵¹ Golan, Op. Cit., p. 249.

represented an important point in the growth of Turkish anti-Americanism, and persuaded Ankara of the need to gather support in other places. On 22 June 1964, Ulus suggested that Turkey should withdraw a large part of its forces from NATO and sign a non-aggression pact with the Soviets. Moscow took note of this, and by the time Erkin took up a renewed invitation to visit the Soviet Union in November 1964, the Russians had devised a solution aimed at placating and winning over the Turks, while at the same time not offending Archbishop Makarios and the Greek Cypriots.⁵² The Soviet Union was not directly involved in the 1964 Cyprus crisis, nor was its position consistent throughout. Rather, it was a case of exploiting a conflict in order to further Moscow's own interests.

Prior to this visit, on 31 August it was announced that the two countries had agreed to cooperate in the building of a dam on the Arpaçay River for irrigation and the generation of hydro-electric power. This was the first joint economic project undertaken by the two countries since the Turkish coup of May 1960. The Turks had not taken up a Soviet offer, made in April 1964, of financial and material aid for their Five-Year Plan. Although they had accepted \$7.5 million worth of Soviet industrial credits in the fifties, they still wished to avoid a large-scale influx of Communist personnel.⁵³

1964 saw the removal of Khrushchev, the architect of the Soviet "friendship offensive" towards Turkey. Consequently, the Soviet Ambassador in Ankara called on the Turkish President to assure him of the continuity of Soviet policy and good will, and repeated the invitation for Erkin to visit Russia, which this time was accepted. According to the speculations of the press reports of that time, he apparently emphasised the possibilities of closer economic relations, with one of the main reasons for his visit being Turkey's need for the substantial aid which the West had not fulfilled. Turkey was also interested in finding new support for their Cyprus policies and possibly in influencing the US

⁵² FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Mehmet Gönübol vd., *Olaylarla Türk Dış Politikası, 1919-1995*, 9. Baskı, (Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi, 1996), p. 418-427.

⁵³ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

in theirs. The joint communique issued at the end of the visit (30 October-6 November 1964) announced an agreement in principle on increased trade, the signature of a cultural agreement and Soviet acceptance of the separate existence and legal rights of the two Cypriot countries. Turkey was satisfied by final point in particular as an expression of support for the Turkish policy on Cyprus. However, it did not mean an end to continued Russian support for the Greek Cypriots. Although it was not expected for the Russians to aggravate the Cyprus problem, this did ensure that the island was not used as NATO base, and that it continued to be a source of friction between NATO members, especially Turkey and Greece, which the Russians believed would be a source of embarrassment for NATO.⁵⁴

Erkin's visit to Moscow was a clear indication of the change taking place in Turkey's attitude, presumably in response to what Ankara perceived as American desertion over the Cyprus issue. Ankara thus rewarded by a Soviet step closer to the Turkish position on Cyprus, in the form of the communiqué issued at the end of the Erkin's visit containing a reference to "the legal rights of the two national communities" on the island. This position was repeated by President Podgorny during his visit to Turkey in January 1965 and by Gromyko during his visit to Turkey in May 1965. It is possible to explain the change in the Soviet position as a result of the change of Soviet leadership, with the replacement of Khrushchev by Kosygin and Brezhnev in October 1964.⁵⁵

Any Russian plans to coax Turkey back in its direction were disappointed, since the latter had no intention of severing their political and economic ties with the West. In October 1964, the Turkish Foreign Office declared that there was no economic advantage in taking a neutralist stance. It was more manoeuvrability in its foreign policy that Ankara wanted. In Erkin's words at his address to the Turkish Senate on November 12, Ankara wished to "obtain maximum support in its national causes". This statement had also said that Turkey saw its future as part of a unified Europe. As a result on 1 December 1964, an

⁵⁴ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Oran, Op. Cit., p. 773-776.

⁵⁵ Golan, Op. Cit., p. 249-250.

agreement signed on 12 September 1963 providing for Turkish associate membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) came into force. Turkey regarded this organisation as the core of a future federated Europe, of which it would very much wish to be part of, having been orientated towards Europe for two centuries. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) naturally attacked Turkish membership of the Common Market as part of her overall policy of detaching Turkey from its Western alignment.⁵⁶

During 1964, a visit to Turkey by a delegation of the Supreme Soviet was postponed twice because of the Cyprus situation, once in February and once in July. Erkin's visit to Moscow served to remove this obstacle, and under the leadership of Nikolai Podgorny, a member of the Politburo and a potential successor to Khrushchev, the delegate were guests of the Turkish Government from 4 to 13 January 1965. According to Pravda on January 4, the Turkish press had become friendlier towards the Soviet, giving extensive and overall favourable coverage of this first Soviet visit to Turkey. Criticism of the détente came from the opposition parties, and the Justice Party in particular voiced the traditional Turkish fear of Russian expansionism. Since it was Cyprus that now justified the rapprochement for the Turkish public, Podgorny reiterated the "two communities" formula. Moreover, in January 1965, Turkey withdrew support from NATO's proposed Multilateral Force (MLF), which it had originally endorsed. The West interpreted this as a response to Soviet accommodation over Cyprus. In the British Ambassador's opinion, the Turkish denial that their change in stance was for better relations with the Soviet Union rather than financial reasons was "to be considered in the light of the fact that the Turks only had one per cent of the costs of the MLF to bear."⁵⁷

⁵⁶ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

⁵⁷ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FO371/180150, Annual Political Report for Turkey for 1964. Ürgüplü agreed to the opening of significant economic relations. Progress then began in Turco-Soviet relations. After long negotiations these finally materialized in the form of a 200 million dollars Soviet credit, with quite favourable conditions, for a number of mainly industrial projects to be undertaken with Soviet assistance in Turkey. It was virtually doubled in 1972 when the Soviets accorded an additional 280 million

In April 1965, Soviet claims to the districts of Kars and Ardahan, renounced twelve years earlier by Molotov in May 1953, were rekindled by the demonstrations in the Armenian SSR on the 50th anniversary of the Ottoman Empire's exile of Armenians during the First World War. As the Ambassador stated, although the Soviet Government had denied support for the Armenian homeland provided for under the Treaty of Sévres (1920), the significant immigration of Middle Eastern Armenians into the Armenian SSR led to the Turks accusing the Russians of building "a new Israel". However, the Soviet Government did not want relations with Turkey to be impeded, and the Soviet Press did not give much coverage to the anniversary. In February and March 1966 Moscow relieved Zarobyan, the First party Secretary in the Armenian SSR, and other senior officials of their posts. The Soviet Government found the implications of Armenian nationalism a matter of concern, but in the words of the Ambassador, "it [was] interesting that its actions in the Armenian SSR occurred at the time of the 45th anniversary of the signature of the Treaty of Friendship with Turkey. Moscow would not wish to be thought to be exploiting Armenian irredentism against the Turks, especially when they had a new and more conservative government."⁵⁸

In February 1965, the third coalition Government of İsmet İnönü, who had initiated the change in Turkish foreign policy, collapsed. Suat Hayri Ürgüplü, who had led the Turkish Parliamentary delegation of 1963, took his place at the head of the new coalition. However, no change was observed in Ankara's policy towards the Soviet Union, and from 17 to 22 May 1965 the Soviet Foreign Minister, Gromyko came to Turkey on an official visit.⁵⁹

The Turks hoped that the Russians would fully support their position on Cyprus, following an interview Gromyko had given to *Izvestia* in February; however, they were disappointed when the visit resulted in no further development on this issue. Apparently, Gromyko was

dollars of aid for the Iskenderun iron and steel plant. See Golan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 250.

⁵⁸ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

⁵⁹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FO371/185824, Annual Review for Turkey for 1965.

“extremely evasive” regarding Soviet arms supplies to the Greek Cypriots. While the joint communiqué remarked on the improvement of economic relations, and Turkey even accepted a condemnation of colonialism, it would not yield to the USSR’s wish to establish special mechanisms for consultation on matters of common interest, because it believed diplomatic missions to be sufficient in this area. Regarding this issue, it was later reported that Gromyko had gone further than bringing up the “principles of Lenin and Atatürk” by suggesting the revival of the Turco-Soviet Friendship Pact, which had been denounced by the Soviets in 1945.⁶⁰

While Gromyko’s visit to Turkey in May 1965 did not result in anything specific, it did bring about opportunities for high level contact and a further stage in the dialogue, which was continued by Ürgüplü’s visit to Moscow in August 1965. He was accompanied by a delegation containing a large number of economic experts, which signalled the main aim of the visit and constituted its prime achievement. Namely, an agreement in principle for the construction of a number of industrial plants in Turkey with financial and technical aid from the Soviets, which was not actually signed until March 1967. One of the projects was an oil refinery, whereby Turkey hoped to achieve independence from Western oil companies, who had been the target of a violent campaign with hints of anti-Western and anti-American discourse in the Press and Parliament. Although the Soviet Government tried to exploit this campaign by offering Turkey cheap oil, they were not successful.⁶¹

On political terms, bilateral affairs constituted the main focus, and the communiqué dealt with only international matters which directly concerned Turkey; namely, Cyprus, European security and world disarmament. Ankara desired both Soviet support for Cyprus and aid for Turkish economic development. In order to do this, it was willing to concede to some Soviet policies. This time, the Turkish agreement that “partial measures which would further the cause of general and complete disarmament” were required, appeared to align the Turks

⁶⁰ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

⁶¹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

more closely with the Soviet position than that of the West, which paralleled Turkey's withdrawal from "uncritical and unqualified support of Western policies" and reflected the country's wish for "a more flexible foreign policy framework."⁶²

Developments under the Justice Party 1965-1971

The election of Süleyman Demirel and the accession of the Justice Party to power in October 1965 were greeted reservedly by the Soviets, who knew all too well that the Justice Party had frequently adopted a critical approach to the rapprochement. Nevertheless, this did not deter them from supporting improved relations. Indeed, Demirel also needed friendly relations with the Soviet Union as the previous Prime Ministers, if only as "a bargaining counter" in his relations with the West. The 45th anniversary of the signature of the Treaty of Friendship on 16 March 1966 saw an exchange of warm congratulatory messages. However, while the Soviet Government expressed their pleasure at the "good-neighbourliness" of the relationship, they also referred to Turkey's membership of NATO and CENTO as a reminder they would prefer Turkey to adopt a neutral approach to foreign policy in order for relations to be completely as they desired. Uluş repeated the call it had made the previous year for the signature of a pact with the Soviet Union. The Turkish Parliamentarians who visited the Soviet Union in August 1966, which the British Ambassador saw as "another indication of continuing cordiality between the two countries", viewed their primary goal as the achievement of complete trust and understanding between the two countries. The Soviets were especially interested in achieving such a relationship, given Turkey's previous suggestion that it could not consider neutrality until it had complete confidence in the intentions of the Soviets.⁶³

The Montreux Convention and the Straits Question

Like its predecessor Tsarist Russia, the Soviet Union always coveted control of the Straits. As the British Ambassador expressed, while the

⁶² FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

⁶³ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Gönübol vd., Op. Cit., p. 526-528.

Straits had always had a profound effect on Turco-Soviet relations, they did not figure prominently in the current period. Although the Soviets wanted to have a say in the management of the Straits, their activities were generally restricted to complaints against alleged violations of the Montreux Convention, mostly by US vessels.⁶⁴

The Russians did not attempt to renegotiate the Convention after its basic term had expired in July 1956. Despite the Bosphorus' strategic implications for the defence of the southern USSR aid for supplying the Soviet Mediterranean fleet, the British Ambassador assumed that the Soviet Government probably considered that any negotiations would be unlikely to be of any benefit when the controller of the Straits at that time was from the opposite camp. Nor did he think Moscow would wish to alarm Turkey by any direct moves which would only serve to negate the good done by the diplomatic "friendship offensive" which they thought might eventually achieve the results the Soviets desired. Meanwhile, the Turks retained sovereignty over the Straits and were obliged to apply the provisions of the 1936 Montreux Convention.⁶⁵

The US made a point of sending warships through the Straits in order to assert the right of non-riparian states to enter the Black Sea, In January 1966, the Soviet Government protested at what they called the "provocative activities" of two American vessels in the Black Sea. The aim of this protest, which included the wish that "the Black Sea should be a zone of peace and calm" was to exclude the US Navy from the Black Sea and was the first of a number of similar protests of this nature. This and other protests concerning the use of the Straits by other countries' warships were part of what seemed to be the Soviet policy on the Bosphorus at that time. Specifically, to extract the maximum advantage from the Montreux Convention as it stood. Consequently, Turkey was involved in a number of difficulties as a result of the interpretation of obsolete

⁶⁴ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Selma Yel, *Değişen Dünya Şartlarında Karadeniz ve Boğazlar Meselesi, 1923-2008*, (Ankara: ATAM Yayınları, 2009), p. 9-57.

⁶⁵ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Yel, *Op. Cit.*, p. 57-147.

provisions in the Convention.⁶⁶

Developments in 1966-67

Neither the question of the Convention nor that of US bases arose when Prime Minister Kosygin's visit to Turkey in December 1966, the first ever by a Soviet Premier. During the visit numerous agreements were signed between the two countries. Pravda and Izvestia thought it necessary to underline that this visit was not an isolated incident, but part of a continuing policy of increasing contacts and improving relations. Izvestia expressed its pleasure at the fact that many deputies in the Turkish General Assembly who had previously opposed rapprochement now supported it, claiming that it was a reference to the justice Party's apparent change of attitude towards the Soviet Union. The talks on this occasion dealt with international affairs in more detail, in addition to covering bilateral political and economic matters. The Russians did not succeed in persuading the Turks to include in the communiqué a call for a European Security Conference, because the latter insisted on the guaranteed participation of the US. However, Demirel did agree to break with Turkish policy and comment on Vietnam, although his choice of discourse did not embarrass the Americans. It pleased the Turks to interpret the reference to the Security Council Resolution of 4 March 1964 as Soviet criticism of the Czechoslovak supply of arms to the Greek Cypriot Government. The Ambassador noted that Kosygin had declined to make an overt criticism of the Czechs, on the apparent grounds that this would be interference in a sovereign state's domestic affairs. He continued to state that, in fact, the reference to the 1964 Security Council Resolution, which pleased the Turks, and a reference to the 1954 Geneva Agreements on Vietnam, which pleased the Russians, was both instances of the two sides' "respective desires to ingratiate themselves with the other without in fact conceding anything positive".⁶⁷

In February 1967 witnessed the signature of a border protocol redefining the Turco-Soviet border. The original demarcation had been

⁶⁶ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

⁶⁷ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/614, Turkey: Annual Review for 1967.

negotiated by a joint Russian and Turkish commission in 1925/26, but ensuing changes in the Aras river bed meant that the exact line of the frontier was uncertain. The issue of the frontier had arisen previously as a result of the Soviet Union's claim to the districts of Kars and Ardahan in 1945, and by the Armenian demonstrations of 1965. While it might have been expected that the signature of a border protocol would reassure the Turks that the Russians did not have any designs on Turkish territory, official agreement on this heavily guarded frontier did not bring the continuing occurrence of border incidents to an end. However, according to the Ambassador, what was interesting about these incidents was that they tended to be played down in the interests of "neighbourly relations".⁶⁸

Soviet Aid Agreement, 1967

A result of the improvement in bilateral relations was the provision of Soviet aid, which had in fact been on offer for some time before the Turks were willing to accept it. At the beginning of the 1960s, the Turks had aimed to attain a high level of economic development by the mid-1970s. They planned to accomplish this by means of three successive Five-Year plans, which would require a substantial flow of foreign aid. Consequently, one of the basic principles of Turkish diplomacy at that time was to establish or maintain aid sources. In July 1962, the OECD set up a consortium to assist Turkey's Five-Year Plans and had contributed well over \$1,000 million by 1972. A NATO Ministerial meeting in December 1964 decided to give military aid to Turkey, while CENTO had been a source for economic assistance from the US and the UK.⁶⁹

The agreement enabled the Turkish Government to demonstrate its independence of the West, although in fact the amount of the Soviet aid was not significant in comparison with that given by the West. In January 1968, Demirel said "Turkey's target is to benefit from every source which does not jeopardise her political independence". The

⁶⁸ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/614, Turkey: Annual Review for 1967. Golan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 244-257.

⁶⁹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

Turkish Government were clearly not particularly concerned at the prospect of either accepting Soviet money or of large numbers of Russian technicians entering the country. This was a remarkably different outlook from 1963, when Turkey had been prepared to consider only the visit of a Turkish Parliamentary delegation to the Soviet Union.⁷⁰

In March 1965, the Turkish Foreign Minister, Hasan Esat Işık, announced that Turkey was ready to accept Soviet aid, and when Prime Minister Ürgüplü visited the Soviet Union in August of the same year, he brought a list of projects for which he wanted help in financing. Two years of negotiations ensued, culminating in the signing of an aid agreement in Moscow in March 1967. This provided for a Soviet loan of \$200 million for the construction of seven industrial installations. The Turks were to repay the loan at 2,5 per cent interest over a period of fifteen years starting in 1971, and repayment was to be made in Turkish export goods, including manufactured products, some of which would come from the plants to be constructed under the terms of the agreement.⁷¹

The Effects of the June War, 1967

A side-effect of the Arab-Israeli June War of 1967 which had a direct effect on Turco- Soviet relations was the increased presence of the Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean. The annual report submitted by Turkey to all signatories of the Montreux Convention showed that of the 152 Soviet warships that entered the Mediterranean in 1967, 107 did so after the June War, and 62 did not return. This meant that in addition to its concern for the security of the southern flank, the Soviet Union was now much more interested in the Straits as a line of communication to its Mediterranean fleet. Additionally, there was a considerable increase in the numbers and tonnage of Soviet commercial shipping, probably making up Arab losses of armaments, and Soviet

⁷⁰ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

⁷¹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FO371/185824, Annual Review for Turkey for 1965.

vessels constituted more than half the traffic sailing through the Straits.⁷²

These developments were naturally a source of anxiety for the Turks, as their position as part of the Northern Tier appeared to have been effectively bypassed. The Ambassador believed that the Turks may have feared that, in the long term, the interface between Eastern and Western spheres of influence could alter sufficiently so as to be an adverse effect on Turkish interests; while in the short term, the presence of a considerable Soviet fleet in the Mediterranean could restrict Turkish options over Cyprus. At the same time, the increased importance to Russia of the Straits might also prompt the Russians to open to discussion once more the question of their control. However, the Ambassador continued, it seemed likely that as long as the Russians remained confident that the Turks would not obstruct their right of passage, they would continue to consider that the Convention served them sufficiently enough. He thought they would probably wish to avoid damaging the improvement in bilateral relations by reviving an issue highly sensitive for the Turks, at least until there was a substantial improvement in their bargaining position. Turkish sensitivity was well illustrated by the alarm aroused by a report in October 1968 that the Russians had offered to set up installations to improve navigational safety in the Straits. Some newspapers exaggerated this into an attempt by the Russians "to capture the Straits".⁷³ In September 1967, two days after returning from a visit to Rumania, Prime Minister Demirel paid a visit to Moscow. The communiqué published at the end of his visit covered largely familiar topics, on familiar lines but there was one major change. Specifically, while in previous communiqués the two sides had expressed a "sincere desire that the Middle East should become a zone of peace and security", since the June War the Russians applied pressure to Turkey to follow the pro-Arab Soviet line. In June the Soviet Ambassador in Ankara, Smirnov, asked for Turkish support on a draft UN resolution which branded Israel

⁷² FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/614, Turkey: Annual Review for 1967.

⁷³ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/614, Turkey: Annual Review for 1967.

as the aggressor. However, the Turks declined to give their support. However, in September 1967, due to a wish for Arab support over Cyprus, the Turks joined with the Soviet Union in calling for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops and in stating that “the use of force cannot justify the seizure of territory”.⁷⁴

1967 was a year of tension in Cyprus. After a Russian denial in February of a Greek-Cypriot report that Moscow would be neutral in the event of Turkish military intervention in Cyprus, in May and June there were rumours of an imminent Greek coup on the island. In November, a Greek-Cypriot attack on the Turkish Cypriots signified a Turkish threat to invade Cyprus. This was averted by the mediation of the US emissary, Cyrus Vance, who managed to avoid upsetting the Turks. The Russians, however, not only avoided giving offence to the Turks but even went so far as to say that the Greek-Cypriot Government “could do much in order to prevent further complication of the situation of the island”. This was interpreted in Ankara as an implication of criticism of the Cypriot Government, and on December 10 İsmet İnönü favourably compared the Soviet position on Cyprus to that of the Americans.⁷⁵

Civil Aviation Agreement, 1968

In May 1968 Evgeny Loginov, the Soviet Civil Aviation Minister, paid a one-week visit to Turkey for the opening of a direct weekly air service between Moscow and Tehran. On the final day of his visit, he signed a Civil Aviation Agreement and a Railway Agreement in Ankara. His visit was returned in July by İhsan Çağlayangil, the Turkish Foreign Minister. The communiqué on this occasion covered the usual topics of bilateral relations and international affairs. However, although only the briefest reference was made to economic relations, these formed the main body of the talks. This was because the cost of Soviet financial projects had been underestimated, causing two of the seven schemes (a vodka factory and a plate glass factory) to be dismissed. More money was still

⁷⁴ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Oran, Op. Cit., p. 776-778. FCO9/614, Turkey: Annual Review for 1967.

⁷⁵ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

necessary, but the two sides agreed to wait until they had a clearer idea about the costs. Talks also touched on the problem of increasing Turkey's exports to the Soviet Union, which would require diversification of the goods exported, and the Turks turned down the Soviet suggestion that the annual trade protocols be replaced by a three-year agreement. They were evidently chary of committing themselves so far ahead when dealing with the Soviet Union.⁷⁶

The Invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Turkey's attitude

While Çağlayangil was in Moscow in July 1968, the extreme Left-wing Turkish Labour Party departed unusually from its pro-Moscow line by criticising the Soviet Union for aiding the Turkish "establishment" with industrial credits. Later the same month, Mehmet Ali Aybar, the party's Chairman, attacked Soviet pressure on Czechoslovakia, saying that the Soviets should "get out of the habit of acting towards other Socialist countries with the superiority of a great power".⁷⁷

Although the invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 was viewed by the Turkish Government and the main opposition parties as a confirmation of Turkey's continued need for NATO, official reaction was reasonably restrained in the interests of good relations with the Soviet Union. Çağlayangil said that the "détente atmosphere" had been "gravely impaired", and Prime Minister Demirel said that the Brezhnev doctrine revealed the real purpose of the Warsaw Pact. However, only political contacts were curtailed; economic and commercial relations continued unimpeded.⁷⁸

In November 1969, President Cevdet Sunay paid the first visit to the Soviet Union by a Turkish Head of State. It was largely a formal occasion, although the Russians did not miss the opportunity to try to obtain agreements from the Turks on subjects they had previously declined to consider. President Cevdet Sunay agreed "to investigate possibilities for concluding a long-term trade agreement between the two

⁷⁶ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/1091, Turkey: Annual Review for 1968.

⁷⁷ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/1091, Turkey: Annual Review for 1968.

⁷⁸ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/1091, Turkey: Annual Review for 1968.

countries” and he also admitted that “it may be useful ... to have a conference on question of European security”. However, Turkey was only committed to considering a long-term trade agreement, and the section on the European Security Conference contained a formula which the Turks regarded as permitting American and Canadian participation. The Russians were also disappointed in their hope of replacing the formula “good neighbourliness” in the communiqué with the term “close friendship”.⁷⁹

By the end of the 1960s, there were over 1000 Soviet economic advisers in Turkey, and Turkey was to become one of the largest Third World recipients of Soviet economic aid and trade. Progress was also made in the political sphere. Exchanges of high-level visits became relatively standard after Kosygin’s visit in 1966, the first ever by a Soviet Premier, to Turkey.⁸⁰

Developments in 1970s

In May 1970, Turkey hosted the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, Vladimir Vinogradov. The visit was arranged at short notice and was apparently inspired by the letter from CENTO’s regional members to the United States and the Soviet Union concerning the Middle East. Turkey also voiced some dissatisfaction over the operation of the Soviet credits, and it was reported that the Russians felt they had to compensate for the Turkish belief that they were supporting the increasing student agitation and thus interfering in Turkish internal affairs. The Turks agreed to consider the possibility of consular and road transport agreements but declined to involve themselves any further in the Arab-Israeli conflict. They obtained an assurance from Vinogradov that the problems over the credits would be solved.⁸¹

The 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union was in June 1970. The Russians expressed pleasure at the improvements in bilateral relations and claimed that the two

⁷⁹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Oran, Op. Cit., p. 776-778. FCO9/1308, Turkey: Annual Review for 1969.

⁸⁰ Golan, Op. Cit., p. 251.

⁸¹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/1466, Turkey: Annual Review for 1970.

countries now held similar views on various aspects of international affairs. The Soviet press was inclined to attribute to anti-Western feelings a wider currency than was the case, but Pravda noted that there were still “forces” opposed to the rapprochement. The Secretary-General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Orhan Eralp, also referred to similarity of views after his visit to the Soviet Union in September 1970. Although in fact the topics to which he made reference (the Middle East, Vietnam, and the plan for a European Security Conference) were matters on which agreement had already been defined previously. Although the Turks said that his talks in Moscow should be seen “in the context of the gradually improving relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union”, it appeared that they represented no more of an advance in these relations than had Vinogradov’s talks in June.⁸²

The Ambassador suggested that a possible exception to this assessment was the indication that talks were continuing on the conclusion of a road transport agreement, which was eventually signed in October 1970, and was on similar lines to transit agreements which Turkey already had with Rumania and Bulgaria. It provided for the transportation of personnel and commercial goods and gave the Soviets overland access to the Arab countries. This was initially a cause of alarm for Israel, who was sensitive to the possibility that the Soviet Union would supply the Arabs with arms via this route. As for the Turks, they gained more direct access to markets in Northern Europe.⁸³

In the meantime, there was a minor incident between the two countries in 1970, arising from the hijacking of a Soviet aircraft to Turkey by two Lithuanians. In October 1970, a Russian airliner on an internal flight was hijacked to Trabzon in Turkey. The hijackers, two Lithuanians, who also killed a stewardess, asked for political asylum. The Soviet Government demanded that they returned to the USSR and were convinced they had “drawn the ace” when an American U8 aircraft, carrying two senior American officers and a Turkish colonel wandered across the border and landed at the Soviet airport of

⁸² FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/1466, Turkey: Annual Review for 1970.

⁸³ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

Leninakin. The Russians made it clear that they intended to use the U8 party as “bargaining counters” for the extradition of the Lithuanians, but “their ace was speedily called” when a second Soviet aircraft was hijacked to Turkey, this time to Sinop. Other than two more hijackers, the Turks now had their own bargaining force: the pilot of the aircraft and a passenger, who had been innocent victims of the hijacking. The two countries’ mutual disapproval was expressed by the muted response by the Russians to the celebration of Turkish National Day on 29 October 1970, and by the Turks to that of the October Revolution on 6 November 1970. On 10 November, the Russians handed over the U8 party to the Turks, and the latter returned the second hijacked aircraft as well as the two Soviet citizens who had come with it involuntarily. The aircraft hijacked to Trabzon were returned promptly as the Turks had wished to avoid upsetting the Russians.⁸⁴

Russian pressure on Turkey for the immediate return of the hijackers not only failed but also hindered the Soviet Government’s “friendship offensive” as the Turks felt they had once more seen the true face of the Russians’. Even after relations had returned to normal, the Soviet Union continued to press for the return of the Lithuanian hijackers. The Turkish judiciary provisionally ruled that the hijacking was performed for political motives; hence, the Turks had not seen fit to return the hijackers. However, in March 1971 it was decided that the killing of the stewardess could not be justified politically, and that the Lithuanians should be tried in Turkey on a criminal charge. Whether or not they would be handed over to the Soviet Union was left open.⁸⁵

Yet both sides avoided major crisis. The Soviets were unsuccessful, however, in their attempts in the 1960s and early 1970s to obtain a new non-aggression pact or friendship treaty with Turkey, obtaining in 1972 only a “Declaration of Principles on Good Neighbourly Relations.” Nor did they succeed in their encouragement of Turkey to eliminate the American military presence in the country.

⁸⁴ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/1466, Turkey: Annual Review for 1970.

⁸⁵ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/1606, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971.

The Russians promptly took measures to mend their relations with Turkey. As early as 10 November 1970, Tass published a report which emphasised Atatürk's friendship for the Soviet Union. Nor was the Soviet Government upset by the "coup by memorandum" of 12 March 1971, when the threat of intervention by the Armed Forces caused the Justice Party to resign and an "above party" Government to be formed. At the Soviet Communist Party's 24th Congress later that month, Brezhnev described Soviet relations with Turkey as normal. In May the Soviet Ambassador in Ankara, Grubyakov, called on Prime Minister Nihat Erim to convey "his government's wishes for success and friendly relations", Erim also accepted an invitation to visit the Soviet Union, although no date was set.⁸⁶

The Russians had not been as hopeful of the "coup by memorandum" as they had been of General Cemal Gürsel's takeover in May 1960. Nevertheless, given that the Armed Forces were the effective arbiters in Turkish politics, the Russians needed to appreciate the potential value to themselves of a Leftward-inclined junior officer corps. In February 1968, the Soviet Embassy in Ankara had stated that its government was keen to establish contacts between the Turkish and Soviet Armed Forces. The memorandum of 12 March was purported to have been initiated by the imminence of a coup on the part of radical elements among the officers. However, a thorough cleansing and continuing "weeding" appeared to have restored the former moderately liberal character of the Army, and to have averted any immediate danger of a direct military take-over by Left-wing elements and a subsequent change of foreign policy.⁸⁷

It was once again a Cyprus crisis which gave new momentum to Soviet-Turkish relations in the mid-1970s. Apparently to placate the Greeks or at least Makarios during his official visit to the Soviet Union in 1971, Moscow back-tracked from its earlier tilt towards Turkey.

⁸⁶ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Oran (ed.), *Op. Cit.*, p. 778-781. FCO9/1606, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971.

⁸⁷ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/1606, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971.

Turco-Soviet relations experienced a setback on the occasion of President Makarios' visit to Moscow in June 1971. The Turks took exception to the section of the communiqué concerning Cyprus, which made no reference to two national communities. The Turkish Foreign Minister, Osman Esim Olcay, communicated the Turkish Government's displeasure to the Soviet Ambassador, who assured him that Soviet policy on Cyprus had not changed. Gromyko also sent a message, via the Turkish Embassy in Moscow, denying any change in the USSR's Cyprus policy and informing Ankara "of the great importance attached to friendship with Turkey and Turco-Soviet relations".⁸⁸

The British Ambassador believed that it was likely that the Russians gave relations greater importance to relations with Turkey than those with Cyprus, and it was therefore possible that any Soviet assistance for the Greek-Cypriots should a Turkish intervention occur would be restricted to support in the United Nations. The Turks could not be sure of this however, nor could they be certain that the Soviet Government had not secretly promised the archbishop more support.⁸⁹

The Turks were reassured on the occasion of President Podgorny's visit to Turkey (11-17 April 1972) by a reiteration of Soviet policy towards Cyprus, although by agreeing to rule out enosis "in any form" they put the possibility of double enosis at risk. The main result of the visit was the adoption of a joint "Declaration of Principles on Turkish-Soviet Good Neighbourly Relations". This was a less spectacular development than the proposal reportedly made by the Russians prior to President Podgorny's visit, that the two sides should revive the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation. On the economic side, it was decided "in principle" to increase the capacity of the Iskenderun steel works to 2 million tons, as provided for by the 1967 Agreement. However, the question that remained was whether there was enough money for the job, or whether more would be needed.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO9/1606, Turkey: Annual Review for 1971.

⁸⁹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

⁹⁰ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. FCO1831, Turkey: Annual Review for 1972.

In 1973 relations with the Soviet Union was well maintained, though communism continued to be outlawed. In October 1973, the Speaker led a Parliamentary delegation to the Soviet Union. 1974 was the year of Cyprus. The Turkish military intervention in Cyprus dominated all other events in Turkey and produced such marked international reactions. However, relations with the Soviet Union continued to develop, reflecting Turkey's growing assertion of absolute freedom of action internationally notwithstanding its continued commitment to NATO, CENTO and the EEC.⁹¹

In the summer of 1974, Cyprus erupted once again in crisis when Makarios was removed by a coup apparently engineered by the military rulers of Greece. Turkey responded by invading and occupying close to one-half of the island. Blaming NATO for the crisis, the Moscow refrained from criticizing Turkey's move, thereby at least tacitly supporting it. Although the Soviet Union at least implicitly backed Turkey in the crisis, and was amply praised by Ankara for doing so, the situation was not entirely an easy one for Soviet policy-makers. The greatest Soviet return on the Cyprus conflict was the sharp deterioration which occurred in Turkish-American relations. In response to the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the American Congress cut off US military aid to Turkey in 1975. Turkey responded by closing the American bases in Turkey. With little effort on the part of the Soviets, one of their major objectives (the removal of NATO bases from Turkey) was achieved at least temporarily. In addition, both the position of the Soviets in the Cyprus crisis and the Turkish rift with Washington led to a decided improvement in Soviet-Turkish relations. This was translated into another large economic agreement, a Soviet credit for 700 million dollars for existing and new projects.⁹²

There was renewed progress in the political sphere too, as Ankara declared its interest in a "balanced" foreign policy. In 1976, a Turkish military delegation visited the Soviet Union, Turkish observers were invited to witness Warsaw Pact exercises in the Caucasus, and the Soviet chief-in-staff was invited to Turkey in 1978. None of these things

⁹¹ FCO9/2112, Turkey: Annual Review for 1973. FCO9/2339, Turkey: Annual Review for 1974.

⁹² Golan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 252-253.

resulted in military relations, but they did indicate a more relaxed political relationship.⁹³

In 1976, the Turkish Government continued to build up relations with the Soviet Union, which was seeking a declaration of friendship and cooperation. Exchanges with the Soviet Union were mainly on technical and economic matters but also included a Turkish military visit. The Turks took the Russians to task for their disingenuous way of declaring their new aircraft-carrying submarine-hunter *Kiev* through the Bosphorus under the Montreux Convention. Moreover, they played for time on their December 1975 acceptance of a Russian invitation to sign a “political document”, a declaration of friendship and cooperation, without committing the foreign minister to sign on his planned visit to the Soviet Union early in 1977.⁹⁴

In 1977, the Russians continued to watch and wait. In the face of Turkey’s reluctance to sign a “political document” they had not pressed for the Turkish Prime Minister to pay his long-awaited visit to the USSR. However, at the end of the year they sent a large delegation to a meeting of the Joint Soviet-Turkish Economic Committee at which agreement was reached on a major programme of industrial cooperation.⁹⁵

In 1977, a ten-year economic agreement was negotiated for the sum of 1.3 billion dollars and, two years later, a 3.8 billion dollars agreement was signed for energy-related projects. By the beginning of the 1980s, Turkey had received some 2 billion dollars in Soviet economic assistance.⁹⁶

In January 1978, a new government was formed by Bülent Ecevit. The British Ambassador stated that if Ecevit had some success in improving Turkey’s standing in the sphere of World politics, the same cannot be said of his handling of her deepening economic crisis. He took over a country which was effectively bankrupt. He abandoned the

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ FCO9/2671, Turkey: Annual Review for 1976.

⁹⁵ FCO9/2768, Turkey: Annual Review for 1977.

⁹⁶ Golan, Op. Cit., p. 252-253.

Five-Year Plan of the previous government and introduced a series of austerity measures culminating in a restrictive budget.⁹⁷

In 1978 the most significant political step forward, however, was the signing of a "Political Document on the Principles of Good Neighbourly and Friendly Cooperation". Preceded by the 1972 Declaration and agreed upon in principle during a trip by Kosygin to Ankara in 1976, it took a good deal of negotiation. The Political Document was a breakthrough for Soviet relations with a NATO country. It even had a slight improvement over the 1925 Soviet-Turkish agreement; the latter had banned aggression or joining in third-party aggression against the signatories, while the 1978 Document banned the use of each country's territory for the perpetration of aggression or subversion against other countries. From the Soviet point of view, this was meant to prevent NATO activity or facilities in Turkey, although the Turks had a more limited interpretation. However, the Document was a political achievement from the Soviet point of view even if it proved to have little practical value.⁹⁸

Just two months after the signing of the Political Document, Turkey agreed to the reopening of American bases, in as much as the US had lifted its embargo on arms sale to Turkey. This was a serious blow to what had appeared to be significant progress in the achievement of Soviet goals in Turkey. Turkish Prime Minister Ecevit sent Brezhnev assurances that Turkey's membership in NATO would never be used in a way to create anxiety or insecurity for its neighbour, but the Soviets had sought much more.⁹⁹

The Soviets invoked the new Good Neighbourly and Friendly Cooperation Political Document, but Turkey insisted that this did not

⁹⁷ FCO9/2885, Turkey: Annual Review for 1978. FCO9/3056, Turkey: Annual Review for 1979. On the last day of 1977, the coalition government under Demirel was defeated on a vote of confidence in the National Assembly. Ecevit thereupon formed a government based on the support of his own Republican People's Party (PRP), two other minor parties and eleven former members of the Justice Party, ten of whom were rewarded for the transfer of their allegiance with seats in Ecevit's cabinet. See Feroz Ahmad, *Demokrasi Sürecinde Türkiye, 1945-1980*, (İstanbul: Hil Yayınları, 2010), p. 399-460.

⁹⁸ Golan, *Op. Cit.*, p. 254-255.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

apply. Moscow's gains regarding the Straits were similarly vulnerable; in the absence of any new treaty, Turkish flexibility was entirely dependent upon the goodwill of the government in Ankara at any given time. Thus, as in the past, these vital waterways were still greatly controlled by a NATO country acting according to its own interests. Even the vociferous objection to what many viewed as Soviet support for the flare-up of terrorism and civil disorder in Turkey did not, however, prevent the signing of the Document. Rather, it was only after the US resumed its interest in Turkey, particularly in the wake of events in Iran and Afghanistan that Ankara demonstrated decidedly less interest in Moscow.¹⁰⁰

With the US once again willing to arm Turkey, there were good reasons for Ankara to strengthen its ties to NATO once again. The military coup of September 1980 brought to power many of the very people who had been most critical of Soviet support for terrorism and the Communists in Turkey. Their suspicious attitude towards Moscow was presumably fortified by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979. Ankara strongly protested at the invasion.¹⁰¹

It would appear, therefore, that the ebb and flow of Soviet-Turkish relations were basically dependent upon and determined by the state of Turkish-American relations. Domestic Turkish factors did not appear to have played a significant role in as much as improvements and deteriorations in relations often occurred during the administration of different governments in Turkey.

1979 saw not perhaps the abandonment of that approach but its adaptation to a better understanding of the economic and financial realities which dominated Turkey's international relations. As a result, there was a small but not imperceptible change for the better in Turkey's relations with the West, and particularly with the US. However, Turkey's relations with the US improved during 1979. Contacts with the Moslem countries nevertheless remained an important feature. 1979 saw less of Ecevit's efforts to give a new direction to Turkish foreign

¹⁰⁰ Golan, Op. Cit., p. 254-255. Indeed, there have been claims, from Ankara itself that the Soviets were behind the war of terrorism which took place in Turkey in the 1970s.

¹⁰¹ Golan, Op. Cit., p. 254-255.

policy, with the result that relations with the West were marginally improved.¹⁰²

In December 1979, the new government, which was formed by Demirel, made it clear that Turkey saw her future as lying with the West and continued to attach great importance to her membership of the NATO Alliance. The new government offered to hold the next ministerial meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Ankara, the first time it would had been held in Ankara for twenty years. Demirel made less attempts of the kind that were made under Ecevit to gain advantage from playing the West off against the Soviet Union and a greater effort to align Turkey's economic and political positions with those of the West.¹⁰³

1980 was the year of the Third Military Takeover. The Generals took over on 12 September to end the violence, amidst general relief. In foreign policy, the emphasis under both Demirel and the Generals was more on links with the West than with either the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe or Third World, loyalty to both the NATO and the Council of Europe being specifically reaffirmed after 12 September. Turkey was not affected internally by the revolution in Iran, but was much concerned not only by developments in that country, but by the threat posed to area stability by the Soviet invasion Afghanistan. Turkey took a leading part in formulating the opposition of the Islamic countries to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, without going so far as to provoke a Soviet reaction against herself.¹⁰⁴

However, this cannot be said that Soviet-Turkish relations ceased or were even reversed in the 1980s. Moscow sought to maintain if not improve relations despite the Turkish-American rapprochement and the cold-war atmosphere which dominated the region in the early 1980s. There was a brief hiatus in political contacts after the 1980 coup, but in late 1982, the Turkish Foreign Minister İler Türkmen visited Moscow, declaring his interest in a stable relationship with the Soviet Union. This resumption of normal relations was consummated after the elections of November 1983. Following these elections, Soviet Prime

¹⁰² FCO9/3056, Turkey: Annual Review for 1979.

¹⁰³ FCO9/3056, Turkey: Annual Review for 1979.

¹⁰⁴ FCO9/3317, Turkey: Annual Review for 1980. Oral Sander, *Siyasi Tarih, 1918-1994*, (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2000), p. 503-508.

Minister Tikonov paid a visit to Ankara, the first visit by a Soviet Premier since Kosygin's 1976 visit. In 1984, the two countries signed their largest ever economic agreement, providing for Soviet crude oil and natural gas to Turkey in exchange for Turkish products. Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Özal visited the Soviet Union in 1986 and there was an exchange of military commanders in 1986 and 1987 as relations between the two countries steadily improved once again. The impact of Gorbachev's new policies was evident in this improvement when the Soviet Union agreed in 1988 to open a crossing point on its border with Turkey, which had been closed since 1937.¹⁰⁵

Despite these ties, it would appear that Moscow was still concentrating its primary efforts on improved relations, even during periods of tougher governments in Ankara, rather than on subversive activity. As in the past, the mainstay of Soviet policy was economic assistance, while striving to prove to Turkey that a stable relationship with Moscow would provide greater security for Turkey than the military and or presence of the US. In view of this argument, the Soviets chose a cautious even cooperative rather than confrontational approach to Turkey. The success of such an approach for the Soviet Union appeared to be dependent, however, more on the fluctuations in Turkish-American relations than decisions taken in Moscow.¹⁰⁶

Economic Relations

A motive for and a result of the improvement in bilateral relations was the expansion of Turco-Soviet trade. This really commenced in 1965, when turnover doubled over the previous year's figure. The balance of trade had usually been favourable to the Russians, and this trend consolidated over following years, with Turkish exports remaining steady while imports from the USSR rose sharply. This imbalance might have been due in part to materials provided for Soviet-aided industrial projects and would probably be corrected when the Turks started repaying the loan. Although Turkey increased its volume of trade with the East European

¹⁰⁵ Golan, Op. Cit., p. 256-257.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

countries as a whole, the Soviet Union became her major trade partner among them. The turnover in trade between the two countries, while in not reaching the levels provided for in the annual trade protocols, was sufficient to promote the USSR to Turkey's seventh largest world trade partner.¹⁰⁷

As was usual in Soviet trade with developing countries, the USSR exported mainly manufactured articles and imports primary agricultural products. The Turks were concerned to diversify their exports, and the trade protocol for 1971-72 provided for the export of unspecified industrial commodities. It seemed likely that the Soviet Union would take some of the products from the projects they had aided. The volume of trade might also have been augmented at the expense of other East European countries: due to the size of its market, the Turks regarded the Soviet Union as less likely to practise "switch" operations, re-exporting Turkish goods.¹⁰⁸

Another product of the improvement in relations was the provision of Soviet aid, under an aid agreement signed on 25 March 1967. The amount of \$200 million envisaged by this agreement was soon seen to be insufficient, and even after two of the projected schemes had been abandoned more money was required. This was eventually furnished by a credit agreement signed in October 1969, which supplemented the original \$200 million with a further \$166 million. The terms of the agreement were described in the body of this memorandum, and the installations to be constructed were as follows¹⁰⁹:

a. A steel plant at Iskenderun. With an initial capacity of 1,000,000 tons rising to 2,500,000 tons per year, it was to be Turkey's third, and largest, steel plant. With \$113.7 million assigned to it, it was also the most expensive of the projects and necessitated the second credit agreement.

¹⁰⁷ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972. Oran, *Op. Cit.*, p. 781-783.

¹⁰⁸ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

¹⁰⁹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

b. An aluminium factory at Seydişehir, with an annual capacity of 285,000 tons.

c. An oil refinery at Aliğa, capable of processing 3,000,000 tons of crude oil a year. This installation derived political significance from the unpopularity of foreign (i.e. Western) oil companies.

d. A sulphuric acid factory at Bandırma. Annual capacity was to be 120,000 tons a year. The factory was opened by President Sunay on 30 June 1972.

e. A fibre-board factory at Artvin, which was to produce 28,000 tons a year.

f. Expansion and improvement of an existing glass factory.

g. Expansion of the vodka producing unit of an alcohol factory.

Projects (f) and (g) were the ones given up by the Turks, who were entitled to do so under the 1967 agreement. Beyond the remaining five installations under construction in 1972, there had been some discussion on the feasibility of an underground system in Istanbul. However, the visiting Soviet Minister for Foreign Economic Relations, Skachkov, informed the Turkish Minister of Industry, Selahattin Kılıç, in October 1970 that Russia would not give Turkey any more loans until the current projects had been completed. This did not rule out loans to the private sector, but none to that date had yet been extended. Unless the Turks took up the Soviet Government's repeated offers to sell Turkey civil aircraft, these factors would tend to discount dramatic developments in economic relations, for the immediate future.¹¹⁰

Assessment of 1960-1991 Period

The Joint Declaration was a measure of the limited, but distinct, improvement in Turco-Soviet relations over the decade. International attitudes to the Cyprus problem, as well as economic and domestic political considerations, led the Turks to recognise the value of a more independent foreign policy. The degree of independence was illustrated by the Turkish statement in 1969 prohibiting US use of the NATO base

¹¹⁰ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

at Incirlik, in the event of their intervention in the Lebanese internal situation. The same flexibility in Turkey's new international outlook permitted the Turks to authorise the use of their airspace by Soviet Migs headed for Arab States. In these and other respects referred to in this report, the modern eclecticism of Turkish foreign policy had worked to the Soviet advantage and corresponded to their policy aims regarding Turkey. Namely, to weaken Turkey's political, economic and military ties with the West as a precondition to increasing Soviet influence over the direction of Turkish policy.¹¹¹

However, although the Soviet Government was at pains to allay traditional Turkish suspicions of Russian intentions, the Turks' "strategic image" of the Russians had not altered significantly. The Turks were willing to co-operate with the Soviet Union on an equal footing, but the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and Soviet activity in and around the Mediterranean gave the Turks reason to doubt that they would retain their equal status in the event of their adopting a neutral stance. As a result, Ankara continued to view Western support as vital for national security. Continuing Western economic assistance also inclined Turkey to maintain her alignment of that time, while the country's association with the EEC had underlined its traditional commitment to everything

European. It was against this background, and in the hope of obtaining Soviet support for Cyprus, that the Turks showed themselves willing to meet the Russians on some points of bilateral and international affairs as well as to accept Soviet economic assistance. For the Soviet Union, the improvement in political and commercial relations helped to improve the Soviet image and stimulated the growth of the Turkish Left.¹¹²

However, the British Ambassador did not consider Left-wing organisations to be of any great significance in Turkey at that time. The Turkish Communist Party itself, supported by the Soviet Government, had been banned from Turkey

¹¹¹ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

¹¹² FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

since 1925. The Turkish Labour Party (TLP) which usually adopted a pro-Moscow stance but had been willing to criticise specific actions of the Soviet Government was dissolved by order of the Constitutional Court in July 1971. Because it was internally divided, it never obtained a significant share the vote. Although Moscow naturally favoured the TLP and the extra-parliamentary Left-wing movement, it did not to jeopardise the official détente by appearing |to be too closely involved with their activities. In January 1967, Kosygin went so far as to deny all knowledge of “Bizim Radyo”, the voice of the Turkish Communist party, which broadcasted from East Germany. More recently, the low priority the Soviet Government assigned to the Left was indicated by its anxiety to maintain good relations with the Erim Government. It was thus inclined by the knowledge that Turkey remained fundamentally conservative and that no party overtly favouring Moscow could expect much electoral success. Hence, democratic elections were unlikely to bring about a radical change in the personnel involved in Turkey’s Government, and a military takeover would only affect the orientation of Turkish foreign policy if Leftist elements among the officers were in control. Therefore, while the character of Turkey’s leaders remained the same; while their confidence in the West’s ability to discharge its protective and economic functions remained un-abused; and until their suspicion of Russian intentions was finally abated, the Turks were likely to retail their alignment of that time.¹¹³

For the future, the British Ambassador predicted that the Soviet Government would probably seek to continue the rapprochement with Turkey and to increase its importance in Turkey’s economy. It would continue to be concerned to win over the Turks, and would pursue this objective by continuing, and widening the scope of contacts between the two nations. It would continue to desire to prise Turkey from the West and would hope for growing support from within Turkish society. He added that it would need to be wary of alarming the Turks by ill-considered actions regarding to its presence in the Middle East, its

¹¹³ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

attitude to the Straits and the Montreux Convention, and its position on the Cyprus question.¹¹⁴

Conclusion

The impact of the Revolution on Turkey's foreign relations was remarkably small. As already mentioned, the government of Menderes had decided shortly before their fall to try and break the ice with Russia, but nothing came of this. Almost the first statements of the Revolutionary government were to the effect that they remained faithful to their alliances with the West (NATO and CENTO), but that there might be nuances of difference in the application of their foreign policy. It was understood that these might be found largely in a greater suppleness in the handling of relations with neighbouring states, i.e. Russia and the Arab world. It was, in fact, been hard to detect any changes at all. The Russians thought they had an opportunity to improve their position and pressed very hard, probably too hard for their own good, to persuade Turkey to accept large scale economic aid and exchange of top-level visits. Both were refused and Turkey's policy of maintaining its Western connexion unimpaired, but so far as this allowed, of normalizing trans-frontier relations with Russia was ably and firmly stated in a letter from General Gürsel to Khrushchev.

The Joint Declaration was a measure of the limited, but distinct, improvement in Turco-Soviet relations over the decade. International attitudes to the Cyprus problem, as well as economic and domestic political considerations, led the Turks to recognise the value of a more independent foreign policy. The degree of independence was illustrated by the Turkish statement in 1969 prohibiting US use of the NATO base at Incirlik, in the event of their intervention in the Lebanese internal situation. The same flexibility in Turkey's new international outlook permitted the Turks to authorise the use of their airspace by Soviet Migs headed for Arab States. In these and other respects referred to in this report, the modern eclecticism of Turkish foreign policy had worked to the Soviet advantage and corresponded to their policy aims regarding Turkey. Namely, to weaken Turkey's political, economic and military

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ANNEXES**Annex-I: Turkey's trade with the USSR (1970)¹¹⁵**

US dollar million		
Year	Imports	Exports
1962	6.4	5.5
1963	8.9	7.1
1964	7.98	9.04
1965	16.66	18.67
1966	26.08	18.47
1967	27.74	28.42
1968	30.46	29.87
1969	33.54	29.96
1970	38.72	29.38

¹¹⁵ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.

Annex-II: Turkey's trade partners (1970)¹¹⁶

US dollar million					
Imports	%	Country	Exports	%	Country
172.0	19.4	USA	117.4	119.9	West Germany
164.2	18.5	West Germany	56.2	0.5	USA
88.1	9.9	UK	44.1	7.5	Switzerland
70.1	7.9	Italy	39.5	6.7	France
44.5	5.0	Switzerland	39.0	6.6	Italy
38.7	4.4	USSR	33.7	5.7	UK
31.8	3.6	France	29.4	5.0	USSR
276.4	31.3	Other Countries	229.2	39.1	Other Countries
885.8	100	Total	588.5	100	Total

¹¹⁶ FCO51/244/RR6/12, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1971. FCO51/296/RR6/4, Turco-Soviet Relations 1962-1972.